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## THE CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

The editorial note written by AMOS N. WILDER introduces a new policy of having individual members of the Association write short editorials to strike the keynote or suggest the main emphasis of each issue of the journal. Dr. Wilder is Professor of New Testament Literature at Chicago Theological Seminary and served as program chairman for the New York meeting at which most of the papers here presented were read.

MARY ELY LYMAN is Dean and Professor of Religion at Sweet Briar College. During the past year she has been president of the eastern branch of NABI.

MILLAR BURROWS is Winkley Professor of Biblical Theology in the Yale University Divinity School.

ROBERT C. DENTAN is Associate Professor of Old Testament at the Berkeley Divinity School, New Haven. The *Anglican Theological Review* for January, 1945 carried an article written by Professor Dentan on the subject, "The Old Testament and a Theology for Today."

FLOYD V. FILSON is now president of the Midwest Section of the Society of Biblical Literature. Members of this Association will be interested to know that the *Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible*, edited by Professors Filson and Wright, is now in its third printing and that wall maps taken from the Atlas may be ready when schools open next fall.

SAMUEL L. TERRIEN was educated in Europe and Palestine and received the Th.D. in 1941. He is Assistant Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament in Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

CLARENCE T. CRAIG is to go on leave of absence from Oberlin Graduate School of Theology March 1 to serve as special educational representative for the International Council of Religious Education in connection with the publication of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament. Dr. Craig was appointed to the Standard Revision Committee in 1938 and has had large responsibility for the final editing of this newest of New Testament versions.

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## *An Editorial Note*

**I**N PLANNING the program of the annual meeting of the Association this last December, the program chairman took a confessedly limited and special field for the over-all topic, that of biblical theology. With that was associated the subject of historicism, so closely connected with it. There are of course many other important topics both of matter and method for our discussions. But it was felt that the present situation in biblical studies justified the choice indicated for one meeting. The chairman wishes to thank those numerous members of the Association who aided him with suggestions for the program, and those who contributed papers.

Two considerations specially influenced the choice of topic. In the first place: the generally acknowledged revival of and interest in biblical theology, evident in recent works both of the scholarly and popularizing type, and in articles in our journals. The variety of treatment of this subject, both as to definition of the discipline and as to approach makes it desirable that we inform ourselves and think through the issues. But in the second place, rightly or wrongly, the whole question of historical-critical method, its scope and competence, has been raised in the discussion. In the eyes of many, biblical theology represents a chief corrective and supplement to the procedure of scientific method in dealing with biblical literature and history.

There are indeed good grounds for claiming that the actual operation of scientific method in such studies, whether in religious

or general history, whether with scripture or with literature and the classics generally, has had its serious liabilities. This is only one aspect of the now increasingly recognized limitations of scientific method and outlook in the modern era. Science has been constantly tempted in all areas to transcend its defined competence, and especially to undervalue data of experience and hypotheses to which its procedures have not been adequate. In the particular field with which we are concerned, that of religion in higher education, the consequences of this have been evident. A basic methodological error in the study of religion has operated widely in our colleges and, indeed, in many of our seminaries, and has continued long after philosophy and the philosophy of history have been aware of the error. It seemed strategic in this our first annual meeting after the close of the war to put these issues to the fore in the hope that a general rethinking of our approach to religious literature might be furthered in a time when so much is expected of our field.

It is to be noted that all the papers insist upon the necessity of historical-critical method. There is no desire to forego the gains of rigorous and free scholarship. But where prevailing methods of study appear to prejudice the fullest grasp of the materials the papers raise various considerations that are worthy of note.

In her presidential address on "The Unity of the Bible" Mrs. Lyman points to the high degree of fragmentation of the Bible often

have come to us in recognition of aspects of unity in the whole. Dr. Filson similarly calls attention to the unwarranted tendency to isolate testament from testament and book from book. Professor Dentan notes our proper reaction today against the presuppositions that have underlain the genetic and evolutionary view of biblical history. Dr. Pittenger\* reminds us of the inevitable factor of interpretation in even the most objective study. A very large issue was raised by him and unfortunately not discussed when he said, "we shall never hope to understand the Bible . . . if we do not bring to this study the additional reality of our Christian appurtenance." He goes on, however, to warn against any mere theological understanding which forgets the historical rootedness of biblical religion.

The reviving biblical theology is often thought to supply that fuller and deeper grasp of the religion of the Bible which historicism forfeits. In the symposium on this subject, we have, however, an important clarification by Professor Dentan. He points out that, historically viewed, biblical theology is an historical-critical discipline, not essentially different from the descriptive study of the religion of the Bible, and sharply to be distinguished from that theological study of the Bible which is so much practised today. On this view biblical theology is, briefly defined, the presentation of the religion of the Bible in topical rather than in chronological order. I do not find this distinction even implicitly in Professor Filson's paper, rather the contrary. Professor Burrows is concerned with the practical task of the discipline. He appears to waive the matter of exact definition though he rejects the view that there is such a thing as an independent system of biblical ideas that can be intellectually presented. He appears, all in all,

implied in recent study, and to the gains that to hold a view like that of Professor Dentan with regard to the scope of the discipline.

Now it is true that a great deal of the most significant contemporary "biblical theology" falls really under the head of "theological study of the Bible." And it is here too that the sharpest issue is taken with historicism. The present commentator is not satisfied that it should be declared out of bounds for true biblical theology. These major questions: the meaning of the Bible as revelation, its timeless religious and ethical values (i. e., their universal relevance and claim), the relation of the Testaments and of their particular corresponding institutions,—can these questions be excluded from the study of biblical theology as Professor Dentan seems to suggest? The most fundamental issue arises with his view which roughly assigns the operation of value-judgments to such questions and excludes them from the scientific presentation of biblical theology proper.

Biblical theology since Gabler has indeed aimed at historical-critical procedure. The question is whether historical-critical procedure does not need to be rethought. We have learned many things about historiography since Gabler. The program chairman confesses to a certain malicious satisfaction in the two papers by Dr. Kroner and President Shuster, with their cumulative buttressing of the modern critique of historicism.\*\* The former in a powerful analysis showed the weaknesses of historicism whether as a supposedly objective and disinterested study of the past, or as "an over-valuation of history rising out of a hypertrophy of scientific method." The latter illustrated out of his own field of literature how many important things art and poetry and tragedy alone can convey of the reality of experience. We should allow the scope of biblical theology to change with the change of our views of historiography. Only so can we present more adequately the fullest significance of the contents of the Bible.

AMOS N. WILDER

\*In an article published in the November, 1945, issue of the JBR.

\*\*The papers by Dr. Kroner and President Shuster will appear in a later issue of the Journal.



# The Unity of the Bible

MARY ELY LYMAN

THIS topic, "The Unity of the Bible," is a timely one. Contemporary trends in research, especially in the New Testament field, raise afresh the question of the unity and homogeneity of the Bible, because in the minds of some the effect of the Form-Critical method is to emphasize diversity and to granulate the writings into tiny separate units. Contemporary theological discussion also raises this question because theological leaders, distressed at this trend in research, are seeking to discover and set forth in fresh terms a conception of unity which cannot be disturbed by historical, sociological, or literary findings. Especially in the school of theological interpretation known as "Neo-Orthodox" is the unity of the Bible stressed. The term "Biblical Religion" coined by theologians of this stamp is revealing of the tendency which attempts to hold the Bible as fully unified and to cover the sweep of developing thought represented from Genesis to Revelation under one comprehensive term. Muriel Streibert Curtis in her review of H. H. Rowley's *Relevance of the Bible*<sup>1</sup> calls attention as follows to this rather widespread attempt to state the unity of the Bible in fresh terms:

In a lecture on "The Present Task in New Testament Studies" Professor C. H. Dodd said in 1936 that Biblical scholars have long worked on separate sections in what might be called a centrifugal movement but that now a centripetal movement is needed; a study of the unity of the process which created the parts, an attempt to interpret the deeper meanings of the dominant themes and translate them into contemporary terms.<sup>2</sup>

Recognition of these current trends in

<sup>1</sup>H. H. Rowley, *The Relevance of the Bible*. The Macmillan Company, 1945.

<sup>2</sup>*Christendom*. Vol. X, No. 3, p. 403

present-day thought about the Bible has led me to review some of the changes in emphasis which have come during my own professional experience. There have been two major centers of question during this period: (1) The Bible and Science and (2) The Bible and History. When I began my teaching in the nineteen-twenties the reverberations of the Bible and Science controversy were still echoing in the classroom. The famous Bryan-Darwin debate on Evolution and Religion which took place in connection with the Scopes trial in Dayton, Tennessee, was in that decade, and any of us who were in college teaching at that time found some students in every class for whom the reconciliation of Genesis with their courses in Science was a real issue.

It was, I believe, directly out of the questions centering about the reconciliation of Science with Religion that the impetus came toward the second major emphasis in the theology of the Bible, namely the questions centering about the Bible and History. It was such books as Gunkel's *The Legends of Genesis*, 1907, Gordon's *Early Traditions of Genesis*, 1907, Fraser's *Folklore and the Old Testament*, 1923, Fosdick's *Modern Use of the Bible*, 1924, Angus' *The Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World*, 1929, that turned the attention of Biblical students from the specific concerns of cosmogony to matters of social background and the historical conditioning of the Biblical writings. It was a logical step, once the difference had been recognized between modern scientific conceptions and the world-view of the Biblical writers.

Viewing the Bible in the light of modern historical and sociological study received its initial strength in the Religionsgeschichte Schule in Germany. In the Old Testa-

ment field the great names associated with this movement were Wellhausen, Duhm and Gunkel and in the New Testament Reitzenstein and Johannes Weiss. To seek to understand the writings in the light of the world of thought which surrounded them, to trace the development of ideas as expressions of the culture out of which they sprang was the aim of this group of scholars. The culmination of this movement we see today in the Form-Critical movement which has had some effect on Old Testament study, but which has reached its apex in the field of gospel criticism. Bultmann and Dibelius in Germany, Basil Redlich, Vincent Taylor and C. H. Dodd in England, S. J. Case, F. C. Grant, Burton Scott Easton, Clarence Tucker Craig, Carl Kraeling, and Donald Riddle in America have all, in varying degrees of commitment to the method, been guided by the principles of this movement, which are summed up in the conviction that no passage can be accurately understood or interpreted until its life-situation (*Sitz-im-leben*) has been explored and the bearing of it on the form of the passage concerned weighed and if necessary discounted. The extreme of the "reductionist" conclusions to which this view may lead is seen in Riddle's *The Gospels, their Origin and Growth*<sup>3</sup> in which the author repeatedly refers to the early Christian movement as "the cults of Jesus," a phrase which carries the implication that Christianity was but one of many religious cults in the Graeco-Roman world and that it has been reduced by historical and sociological study to the status of the others as a redemption religion centering about a dying and reviving Saviour-god.

Another form of this negativism which has resulted from the application of the Form-Critical method to the New Testament field has been a skepticism as to the his-

torical trustworthiness of the gospel records. Many in this society will remember a symposium on the results of recent study on our knowledge of the life of Jesus which was held by the Society of Biblical Literature at its annual meeting some years ago. In the discussion which followed the papers in this symposium, one of the participants, a leading New Testament scholar in America today, affirmed that the only items which he dared to hold as historical about the ministry of Jesus were the fact of a teaching ministry in Galilee, a journey to Jerusalem at passover time and the death on the cross.

No wonder there has been vigorous reaction to such extremes of negativism. It is not surprising that we find in theological circles today a movement in the direction of conservation. The natural reaction to the break-up of the gospel records into tiny units of tradition, classified according to their form, and estimated as to their factual value in the light of their relation to the community-experience in which they arose, has been an attempt to pull together into a theological unity the contributions to faith of the gospel record, and of the Bible as a whole. This counter movement of thought stresses a unified revelation of God in history portrayed in the entire Biblical record. In the synoptic view of history thus arrived at, the divine action is focused in the revelation of God in Christ. This revelation is prepared for by the Old Testament in the "myth" of the fall of man as recorded in the traditions of Genesis, and in Hebrew history, symbolically interpreted. The incarnation of God in Jesus Christ is held to be the dramatic "piercing of history" and all before it is symbolically treated, and all subsequent New Testament writing held to be interpretation of it. History is thus subordinated to theology in such a compressed and unified scheme of thought that the values of history as such fall out, giving place to symbolic theological values. This is what is connoted by the term: "Biblical Religion."

This relationship subsisting between his-

<sup>3</sup>Donald N. Riddle: *The Gospels, Their Origin and Growth*, University of Chicago Press, 1939.

tory and theology in the Crisis-theology scheme of thought was well illustrated to me in a student forum held some years ago at Union Theological Seminary. The students had asked Professor Paul Tillich to state his thought on the historical life of Jesus and its bearing on his own religious faith in Christ. If I may venture to summarize Professor Tillich's response to this question, it would run somewhat as follows: He traced the development of gospel criticism during his life time, saying that doubt had fallen first on the miracle stories in the gospels, and then successively on birth-stories, on the chronology of the events in Jesus' life, and finally even on the teachings of Jesus, as the Form-critics laid stress on the fact that all the records of Jesus' words have come to us through the early church, and that thus they show us what the Apostolic *kerygma* was, but not necessarily what Jesus actually said. Having traced this history of criticism as it affects our knowledge of the content of Jesus' life and teaching, Professor Tillich affirmed that he was unwilling to have his faith—or the structure of his own theological thought—rest upon foundations so subject to critical demolition. If history cannot be determined accurately, then faith should not be dependent on history. Theology should take control and interpret history dramatically or symbolically, or in extreme instances dismiss history as of secondary value, because all that is of vital and ultimate significance is revelation. History thus can be viewed as one unified, consistent, process in which the emphasis falls upon the drama of redemption: the Creation, the fall, the piercing of history by the Incarnation, the death on the cross which is the Atonement and which dramatizes both God's judgment and His grace, and which points forward to the divine close of history, a dramatized eschatology.

Thus with the Form-Critical movement holding the center of the stage in New Tes-

tament criticism, we have at present on the the other hand, we have a high-lighted reactionist" view. In theological circles, on the other hand, we have a high-lighted reaction in the form of this synoptic view of Biblical history, bringing it all under a unified theological scheme of thought.

For the teacher of religion these two contrasting emphases or methods of dealing with the Biblical materials pose a problem. How shall we as teachers of religion, and specifically as interpreters of the Bible deal with these current trends in method and interpretation? Perhaps it helps as we approach this problem to realize that basically the problem is as old as the Bible itself. The conception of "Biblical religion" as fixed and immutable, unified and not subject to the criticism or alterations of history is exemplified in the attitude of the author or authors of the book of Deuteronomy. This formulation of the law was commended to its readers by the device of assuming that this law was spoken by Moses "on the other side of the river" before ever the nomad Hebrews entered into their promised land. Thus the authors reach backward into the past for their authority. They reach forward into the far future also by commanding that these statutes remain forever the guiding principles of Hebrew life.

Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates: That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them.\*

In the New Testament the Epistle to the Hebrews takes a similar view, in interpreting all Hebrew history as leading up to the ultimate and perfect revelation of God in

\*Deuteronomy 11:18-21.

Jesus Christ, who is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." This view includes not only the historic sacrificial system of the Hebrews as symbolic of the divine act of revelation of God in Christ, but unites with it in its symbolic unification of all truth, Platonic idealism with its two worlds of reality and shadow.

Thus the unified view of history has its Biblical expression. And on the other hand the critical evaluation of history with its recognition of varying levels of truth is also represented in the Biblical tradition by the prophets' sharp denunciation of the religion of their time. The prophet may or may not be denouncing all worship when he commends the carrying out of God's righteous purpose for justice in man's dealing with his fellows. But surely he is pronouncing judgment upon a contemporary and historic mode of expressing religious aspiration and the worship of God when he says as if he spoke for God himself: "I hate, I despise your feasts. I take no delight in your solemn assemblies."<sup>5</sup> So in the case of Jesus, there is a clear willingness to separate the old dispensation from the new, to discriminate, evaluate and select when he says: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time . . . But I say unto you."<sup>6</sup>

It is true also that in the history of Christian thought both tendencies are represented. As early as Marcion, a critical view was given vigorous expression. Marcion saw no reconciliation between the God of the Old Testament and the God of Love revealed in Jesus Christ and following this critical evaluation to its logical conclusion, he made his own collection of scripture excising what did not measure up to his standard. Saint Thomas Aquinas on the other hand is the example *par excellence* of one who held a unified view of all truth,—the truth of revelation and the truth of reason. Scripture was held by him as a channel for the divine

knowledge to reach man, though scripture taken by itself did not, he believed, correspond exactly to revelation. With church tradition it served to him as a vehicle for divine knowledge to reach the mind of man in unified form.

The modern scholar and interpreter of the Bible is helped to find perspective on the modern situation by the realization that these two tendencies of thought have had their place earlier and have had recurrent expression through the centuries. But it is not enough merely to recognize the historical roots of the problem. The modern interpreter of the Bible must find his own position and the remainder of this paper will be devoted to an attempt to state in terms of the modern Biblical scholar's task the points which commend themselves to the writer from both schools of thought, for there are sources of strength for our work today in both movements.

First, from the so-called "reductionist" school, the modern teacher of the Bible can and should accept its excellent historical method of study and its scientific technique of dealing with the phenomena of religious experience. The authentic methods of research, accepted and approved by historians and by students of literature, are the methods used by the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule* and by the exponents of the Form-Critical method. These methods of study should be used progressively for the discovery of the historical and sociological conditioning of the literature of both the Old and the New Testaments. And wherever such techniques of study lead the modern Biblical scholar must not fear to go. A recent study which exemplifies in a high degree the method under discussion is Cochrane's *Christianity and Classical Culture*. The approach in this case is from the side of classical studies, but Christianity as a movement is sympathetically and appreciatively treated as a part of the many-sided culture and civilization which the author has ex-

<sup>5</sup>Amos 5:21.

<sup>6</sup>Matthew 5:21.



pertly analyzed and skilfully portrayed. The tools of historical investigation which are employed in other fields of historical research are the tested tools for the Biblical scholar to use, and he should not fear to use them.

Second, the Biblical student can and should accept from the critical-historical scholars their strong position of holding the study of the Hebrew-Christian tradition of thought and experience in relationship with the other fields of study in colleges and universities. Not only the tools but the conclusions can be shared with scholars in other fields. The study of Hebrew traditions as folk material of a Gunkel, the comparative study of Christianity with other Hellenistic cults of a Reitzenstein, the search for the sociological conditioning of the early Christian movement of a Shirley Jackson Case, the work of the Form-Critics in both the Old Testament and the New Testament can live in a university side by side with the work of other historians and other students of language and literature. If Biblical research can speak the same language and adjust its conclusions to those of studies in other fields, and thus create mutual understanding and mutual respect between scholars in the field of religion and scholars in other fields of research, its whole position in the modern world is strengthened. This mutual understanding and respect is too valuable to lose. It will be lost if religion is isolated from the other fields by a theological hedge. Biblical study will suffer loss if it is assumed that only by revelation are the truths of religion discovered. It is not by any means to discredit the truths of revelation that the best scholarship honors the methods of discovery and the conclusions arrived at that are characteristic of other fields of scholarly research. The best scholarship in this field merely asks that what is

held to be revealed truth does not violate the truths of science and of reason.

Again the Biblical scholar is freed for the task of critical evaluation of differing modes of religious experience if he is not bound to a too rigid or too formal concept of the unity of Bible. Is legalism actually as high a form of Hebrew religion as prophetism? Is particularism to be regarded as equally valid with universalism? Must we hold Nahum's hymn of hate for Nineveh on the same level as Amos' conception that Yahweh is not only the God of Israel but the God of the Philistines and Ethiopians as well? Has the wisdom literature as abiding value in the religious life of mankind as the conception of a Suffering Servant of the Lord? Is apocalyptic Christianity to be held as an expression of ultimate religious truth and equally valid with the Sermon on the Mount?

Professor Frank C. Porter's introductory essay in his *Messages of the Apocalyptic Writers* is a fine example of the discriminating and evaluating process. The concluding section of the essay which assesses the permanent value of the Apocalypses begins with a rejection: "The more theoretical or theological messages of the Apocalypses it is evidently impossible for us to accept in any literal way as a message for our time." After a development of this thought of their ephemeral character as descriptions of the heavenly world or the future age, he turns to the practical message which is true for our time as it was for the day in which they appeared—namely, their living faith in an ideal and their eager expectation of its coming into reality. "Their meaning for us," he says, "their abiding truth, is their conquest of self and the world, their resolute choice of the part of God against the apparent interests of the hour, the spirit, at its highest, of martyrdom."<sup>7</sup> Many another writer has exercised this critical faculty of separating the ephemeral and transitory in the Biblical writings from that which is of permanent and abiding

<sup>7</sup>Frank C. Porter: *Messages of the Apocalyptic Writers*, pages 64 and 74.



worth, but I select this outstanding example because it deals with one of the most difficult fields to evaluate and because it shows the scholar's critical judgment at work with special skill. It will be stultifying to our ethical judgment unless we make a place in our interpretation of the Bible for this kind of critical evaluation of its ideas. It was one of the best fruits of the Religionsgeschichte Schule that we were empowered to such discriminations, and there is danger of the loss of it today, if formal conceptions of the unity of the Bible prevail over real ones.<sup>8</sup>

Now let us turn to the other side of the picture. If we gain strength on the critical side from the point of view that does not claim a too rigid unity in the Biblical writing, we gain another kind of strength from the recognition of the basic harmonies that underlie the diversities and the varying levels of value in the Bible. The unity that springs from community of spirit and aim is real and not merely formal and external. The continuity of history in a people peculiarly sensitive to spiritual value, uniquely among the peoples of the earth joined together in the search for the life with God, constitutes a true basis for thinking of the unity of the Biblical story. This drawing together of the generations, this growth as the fathers transmit to the children and to their children's children a heritage of thought and experience, is a different kind of unity from that of theology. It is not formal or theoretical, but rooted in experience, a true unity of continuity and growth.

There is strength for the Biblical interpreter today in the recognition of certain persistent religious ideas and ideals which are basic to all Biblical religion. Ethical

monotheism, once it gains its advocate in Amos in the 8th century B. C., is the controlling principle of Hebrew religion and of Christianity; the thought of God as the cosmic creator, as the sustainer of the universe and the guide of history; God as personal, active with man in history in the fight for goodness and for the just society; the idea of a covenant—a duty basis for the relationship between man and God; the reality of sin and judgment and of man's need for redemption and God's forgiving grace; faith in man's power to rise above his past and find the good life with God—these ideas recur again and again in changing forms and hold in a deep and true unity even the primitive thought of nomad Hebrews with the high conception of the gospels and Paul.

Again there is a cohesive quality in the Bible viewed as a record of the creative power of religion in the life of man. Beneath all the varieties of religious experience here charted, underlying all the changes brought by the evolution of society, from the primitive character of nomad life in the desert to the sophisticated urban civilization of the Graeco-Roman world, there is a constant element in the experience of man which lifts him above his lesser self and which keeps him seeking for fellowship with God, and fuller apprehension of God's will for himself and for society. The shepherd on the plains, the border warrior, the outlaw, the humble owner of home and vineyard, the king, the prophet, the poet, the wisdom writer and apocalypticist, the fisherman following Jesus, the centurion, the evangelist, the publican, the missionary to the Roman world—yes, even Jesus himself—all are bound together in a unity of experience in which the reality of the spiritual world is being apprehended. Prayer and its answer, the reality of God's forgiving and empowering Grace, salvation through suffering—these deepest of all meanings in our human pilgrimage are expressed on their Godward side in the prophet's word: "And ye shall seek me, and find me when ye shall search

<sup>8</sup>Examples of recent studies which approach the Old and New Testament thought from this point of view are H. E. Fosdick: *A Guide to the Understanding of the Bible*, Harpers, 1938, and E. F. Scott: *Varieties of New Testament Religion*, Scribners, 1943.

for me with all your heart,"<sup>9</sup> and on its manward side it finds compact expression in the words of the epistle: "I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him."<sup>10</sup> This unity of religious experience within the framework of the Hebrew-Christian tradition should be a point of positive emphasis in our teaching of the Bible today. Especially in the teaching of the New Testament should this unity be a point of stress, because here, all the writings—whether gospel, chronicle, epistle, homily or apocalypse—have their true focus and meaning in the personality of Jesus.

These basic and real unities of religious thought and experience have been treated in a number of recent studies, sometimes in terms of the unity and coherence of special phases of Biblical Religion, sometimes in terms of the unity of the Bible as a whole. As example of the former one might cite R. B. Y. Scott who declares in his excellent study, *The Relevance of the Prophets*, that there is a Prophetic Theology even though the prophet was not a theologian *per se*.<sup>11</sup> Examples in the New Testament field are Archibald Hunter's *The Message of the New Testament* which points out the dangers of analysis and finds the unity of the New Testament in its dominant theme: Heilsgeschichte or "The Story of Salvation." Another treatment is that of Professor Filson in his *One Lord—One Faith* whose purpose, admirably fulfilled, is stated as follows:

The thesis of this study is that the Primitive Church faithfully preserved the essentials of the mind and message of Jesus. Recent decades have seen many attempts to prove that within a generation the simple teaching of Jesus was radically distorted or thickly overlaid with alien additions.

<sup>9</sup>Jeremiah 29:13

<sup>10</sup>II Timothy 1:12

<sup>11</sup>R. B. Y. Scott: *The Relevance of the Prophets*, pp. 104 ff.

<sup>12</sup>Floyd V. Filson: *One Lord—One Faith*, p. 13.

<sup>13</sup>H. H. Rowley: *The Revelance of the Bible*, pp. 82-83.

This contention implies that the historic Christianity of subsequent centuries has failed to represent truly its Founder and Lord. In direct opposition to this point of view, it must be maintained that there was essential continuity between Jesus and the disciples of the first Christian generation.<sup>12</sup>

An able study which aims at bringing out the unity of the entire Bible—Old and New Testaments together—is that of H. H. Rowley, *The Relevance of the Bible*:

The two Testaments are one, he says not in the sense that they duplicate a single message. Were that the case either could be dispensed with without serious loss. They are one in the sense in which the parts of a musical cadence are one. Without the final chord it is incomplete, a process that does not reach its goal. On the other hand the final chord however beautiful it may be as a chord, is robbed of its full significance without the chord that should precede it.<sup>13</sup>

The values for our modern interpretation in these expressions of the unity of the Bible are obvious. It is religiously satisfying and religiously quickening to participate in this thought of the oneness of God's revelation to man as made clear in the Hebrew-Christian tradition.

But the modern scholar and teacher should be mindful of both sides of the picture. He is the stronger in his interpretation if conceptions of variety and conceptions of unity meet and are both utilized in the richer harmony of skilled historical criticism plus warm theological interpretation. Critical evaluation and historical judgment will be strengthened by analysis. Religious and theological values will be quickened by the recognition of the abiding unities of thought and experience which are not subject to cultural change or social adaptation. Only by the recognition of both elements have we promise of a meeting of the needs of our present and of all succeeding generations. And it is upon this note that I would close. The view of the Bible which recognizes diversity and change and different levels of value, but which at the same time

appreciates the real unities of religious thought and experience is the view which has hope for the future of our world. Such a view bases our hopes for the future on a sure foundation of faith in a God whose nature and will have been revealed in human history through its multitudinous changes and of faith in Christ who ministers to the

spiritual need of mankind in all its varying forms and is the same yesterday, today and forever. Such a view empowers us to believe in a society which can lay hold on God's purpose and be quickened because All these "received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us that apart from us they should not be made perfect."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Hebrews 11: 39-40.

# The Task of Biblical Theology

MILLAR BURROWS

THE task of biblical theology is, as I see it, to bridge the yawning chasm between our basic critical studies in biblical history, literature, and exegesis and the practical use of the Bible in preaching and religious education. We have a large and growing body of knowledge concerning the Bible, and we have highly developed techniques for meeting the religious needs of the people in our churches and schools, but between these there is at present a great gulf. Biblical theology must build a bridge across it. To change the figure, we have in the Bible a storehouse full of grain and meat and fruits and vegetables, and in our schools and churches we have a lot of hungry folk who need the calories and vitamins, but are unable to find the particular things they need or to digest them in the raw. Biblical theology must process and package these foods for the consumer.

In case you may wonder what this has to do with theology, let me explain at once that as I use the term biblical theology, it does not indicate a system of religious truth or belief, supposed to be derived from the Bible and standing by itself as an object of interest for its own sake. In that sense there is no such thing as theology in the Bible. But if what may be called the theology of the Bible is something less than a systematic, comprehensive body of religious truth, it is also something more. Real religion is always a living movement, involving an intellectual element but in such a way that belief is closely bound up with experience, worship, and conduct, and cannot be understood apart from its connections with them. Revelation in the Bible is concerned with life. God is revealed, not as a metaphysical entity, but as a personal will, directed to man's conduct and attitudes. Christ is God's gift to man for

his salvation from sin, and sin has no meaning apart from specific attitudes and acts. It is this inextricable involvement in life that gives the Bible its vital significance for us and for all men.

Biblical theology, therefore, cannot be concerned with matters of belief exclusively, or consider them by themselves as subjects of intellectual apprehension. It must have in view the whole of religion. It must deal with the institutional as well as the verbal expressions of faith; indeed, since biblical religion is largely and directly concerned with life, biblical theology must give some consideration to questions of ethics, sociology, politics, and even economics. That is a lot of territory for any study to cover, to be sure, but the religion of the Bible takes in all of it. Apart from these various strands in the bundle of life we simply cannot understand even the religious terminology of the Bible, to say nothing of the theological convictions expressed by it.

Of course biblical theology cannot and need not work out all the implications of the religion of the Bible for our life and thought. It cannot take over the jobs of systematic theology and Christian ethics. The formulation and defense of the gospel in terms of modern knowledge must be left to systematic theology and the philosophy of religion. Its practical application in modern life must be left to the studies which deal directly with the conditions and needs of our time. But so long as the Bible is in any sense a standard of Christian theology and ethics, as it must be if the term Christian is justifiable, the biblical theologian has a right to say, and his colleagues have a right to expect him to say, whether what they are formulating and elaborating really is the gospel. He has enough to do without



trespassing on their domains, but he should not leave any unoccupied No Man's Land between himself and them.

Biblical theology presupposes the results of free, intensive, scholarly study of the Bible. Otherwise its concern for the practical use of the Bible would always involve a serious danger of misinterpretation. We cannot simply come to the Bible with our own needs in mind, bringing our questions to it as to an oracle. Throughout the history of the use of the Scriptures in the church that way of approaching it has been responsible for an untold amount of false exegesis and wrong application. At this very hour the woods are full of living demonstrations of the impossibility of a sound interpretation without a solid foundation of objectively established knowledge. There is only one way to avoid this, and that is to see to it that the work of literary and historical criticism is thoroughly done before we raise our questions of permanent implication and present application. What the Bible has to say to us cannot be ascertained until we know what the Bible really says. There is no use going to it at all if we only find in it what we bring to it.

Much of what I might say in this connection has already been said so well in Mr. Pittenger's paper<sup>1</sup> that I need only breathe a fervent Amen. We cannot hope to make a true use of the Bible, to use it in a way which is fair to it, unless we have first come to it with a sincere, thorough attempt at disinterested objectivity. The fact that we can never succeed in being completely objective is all the more reason for making every effort to come as close to it as we can. If liberal critics have often seen only their own reflections when they thought they were seeing Jesus, they were not the first to succumb to that peril. The only way to escape from it, even imperfectly, is to go

farther in the direction in which they were at least trying to go.

I do not believe it is possible to accomplish the purpose of critical study and at the same time work out its practical implications for our own faith and life. Not that religious values should be ignored in critical study. Biblical history which fails to take into account the spiritual convictions and experiences of Israel and the early church is not true history. Any consideration of biblical literature which slights the real concerns of those who wrote the Bible proceeds from a most superficial conception of what literature is. But it is the religious values of the writers and their first readers, not our own, which critical study must consider. What the writers themselves meant by what they wrote, and what the people for whom they wrote understood them to mean, cannot be discovered by one who begins with his own questions and interests. It requires a rigid self-discipline, a subordination of one's own desires and needs, a humble determination to find and face the truth whatever it may be. Each individual student must go through something of this preliminary discipline before he can safely undertake a practical use of the Bible.

This raises a serious question. Must we take the Bible out of the hands of the laity again, merely substituting the pronouncements of scholars for the decisions of popes and councils? God forbid! The untutored and unspoiled insight of simple people is constantly needed to pull the scholars down to earth. Souls were saved through the reading of the Scriptures before modern scholarship was born. But it is still true that where there is no critical knowledge the people often go woefully astray, with very serious consequences. How can they understand what they read except some man should guide them? The Bible cannot be an infallible or even a safe rule of faith and practice when it is misinterpreted. Only when the results of critical

<sup>1</sup>Published in the November (1945) issue of this Journal.



scholarship are humbly and wholeheartedly accepted can we bring our questions to the Bible and seek its answers to them without reading into it the answers we want to find.

Respect for scholarly knowledge in other fields is equally imperative in the formulation of our questions. What are the needs which biblical theology must help the preacher and teacher to meet? The same individual cannot be competent in biblical scholarship and also in the philosophical, psychological, sociological, and other studies necessary for defining the needs of men and women, boys and girls, social groups and nations. The biblical theologian should have some acquaintance with both kinds of study, in order to bring them together and serve as a mediator between them, but he must rely largely upon the specialists in human nature and modern life and thought. The final task of biblical theology must always be to some extent a co-operative job, to be accomplished only by the collaboration of workers in many fields.

Assuming that I have correctly described the task of biblical theology, let me suggest what seem to be the natural stages of the process. The first step is to define as exactly as possible the concrete situation or need to which each unit of biblical material was originally addressed, and the specific 'word' given for that particular need or situation. We must then ask what bearing the word given to God's people of old may have on our present need. Between the interpretation in terms of the original situation and the application to our needs today there may be an intermediate step of generalization, but in practice this is usually unnecessary. The very effort to define the historical situation often brings forcibly to our attention a surprising timeliness for us, due in part to similar conditions but also rooted in the essential timelessness of the Bible.

Of course not everything in the Bible

has any direct relevance at all for us, and in what does have such relevance there are varying degrees of importance. The next step in our task, therefore, is that of selection. It is not safe, however, to assume in advance that any part of the Bible is unimportant or irrelevant. A much closer correspondence with present needs than one would expect may often be found even in such unlikely places as the levitical legislation of the Pentateuch. Also, of course, what is not significant in itself is often essential for the understanding of more important points.

After selection comes arrangement for use. The material must be brought together under suitable headings, so that what is pertinent to the specific requirements of preaching and religious education may be more easily found, and a comprehensive view of the biblical teaching on any particular subject may be secured. The danger of subjective misinterpretation through the very process of selection and arrangement is obvious. Since religious ideas in the Bible are never systematically presented or thought out, any attempt to present them in a systematic form inevitably produces some degree of distortion and misrepresentation. This danger must be recognized, and every possible measure must be taken to reduce it to a minimum; but when that has been done, the risk must be taken. The resources of the Bible for preaching and teaching cannot be fully utilized unless somebody, somewhere along the line, picks out and brings together what belongs together from the point of view of its bearing on specific problems and needs. To facilitate a more adequate use of the spiritual resources of the Bible by making the results of biblical scholarship available in convenient form for religious work is what seems to me to be the important, urgent task of biblical theology.

# The Nature and Function of Old Testament Theology

ROBERT C. DENTAN

WHAT do we mean by "Old Testament Theology"? Recent discussions of the subject serve rather to confuse than to clarify the answer, since writers use the term to describe simultaneously two quite different things. Before we can proceed to any fruitful discussion of the subject, it will be necessary to determine which of these two things we are talking about. The term "Old Testament Theology" is used in recent English and American theological literature to mean either: a. the Theological Interpretation of the Bible, or, b. the Study of the Theology of the Bible. As the theological interpretation of the Bible, biblical theology is interested in its significance for contemporary theology. It is interested in its timeless values, in its meaning as revelation, in its use for teaching preaching and as a source of inspiration for daily life. As applied specifically to the Old Testament, biblical theology in this sense is interested in the significance of the crucial events of Hebrew history for the understanding of Christian doctrine and for a Christian philosophy of history, in such things as the true relationship of Old Testament prophecy to its fulfillment in Christ, in the prefiguring of the sacrifice of Christ in Old Testament priestly institutions, and, in the moral sphere, in the permanent value of Old Testament ethical insights and standards of conduct. In the 19th century, the works of Hofmann, Ewald, and Hengstenberg belonged to this type of Old Testament theology. In our own times it is represented by the works of Hebert, Phythian-Adams and, on a quite different level, by Prof. Wright's *The Challenge of Israel's Faith*. A spate of recent books on "the relevance" of different aspects of the Bible (the Bible

as a whole, the Prophets, Apocalyptic) clearly indicates the hunger of our age for the eternal truths of the Bible and an increasing recognition on the part of biblical scholars of their responsibility to feed this hunger. In this sense of the term then, Old Testament theology is merely ancillary to theology in the larger sense, its method involves the constant exercise of value-judgments and its chief organ must necessarily be the organ of faith.

Certainly, an age which is standing closer to the abyss than any other age in human history has a right to demand that the Bible be presented to it in such terms, and the Old Testament scholar who is content to live in some linguistic or archaeological ivory tower, without considering the things with which he deals in the light of their significance for life and faith, is a curious anachronism. But when we have said this we must then return to our immediate question and ask ourselves if it is legitimate to call this Old Testament, or biblical, theology. One may answer, of course, that one has always the right to use words in a Pickwickian sense and to call anything by any name he chooses. But both logic and common sense demand that we avoid the use of ambiguous terms, and scientific discourse is predicated upon the assumption that when we use the same words we mean the same things. "Old Testament Theology" *might* mean the study of the Old Testament for the sake of its contribution to dogmatic theology; but if the historic meaning of terms is to count for anything, it actually means something almost diametrically opposite.

A brief survey of the history of the dis-

cipline will make this apparent. The earliest occurrences of the phrase "biblical theology" were in connection with collections of proof texts for theological doctrines in which the texts were arranged systematically under the doctrines they were believed to prove. Later, under the influence of Pietism, the term was used to describe books which aimed to free Christianity from the shackles of complex systems of dogma by reverting to the use of simple biblical terms and concepts. These were not so much theological treatises as simple manuals intended for popular edification and the inculcation of piety. A third use of the term is found in certain German works written under the influence of English deism which used the Bible for the purpose of disproving the tenets of orthodox theology. However, toward the end of the 18th century (1787 to be exact) biblical theology was defined by Johann Philip Gabler in his inaugural address at the University of Altdorf, entitled "Concerning the Correct Differentiation of Biblical and Dogmatic Theology," as that discipline which studies the religious ideas of the Bible in their historical setting and in their chronological development, with the use of critical methods of interpretation, and (*nota bene*) in complete independence of dogmatic theology, its interests or presuppositions. Gabler's definition has been regarded as authoritative by most writers on biblical and Old Testament theology for over a century and a half. So far from having any theological interest in their subject, the earliest writers on Old Testament theology were definitely under the influence of the German Aufklärung and of French rationalism. (G. L. Bauer, Ammon, Kaiser and de Wette), and the net result of their labors was to reduce the prestige and value of the Old Testament rather than to enhance it. In the 1830's, the discipline fell into the hands of devotees of the philosophy of history such as Vatke and Bruno Bauer, who used the Old Testament as a vast proving ground for

the principles of Hegel, but succeeded only in cancelling each other out by their mutually contradictory conclusions. It was not until the forties that orthodox scholarship finally caught its breath sufficiently to produce a series of works such as those of Steudel, Hävernich, Oehler and Riehm which treated the Old Testament as a product of revelation in the accepted sense of that word. It is to be noted, however, that none of these writers challenges the definition of the discipline given by Gabler. For all of them it is an historic, scientific discipline and, while all believe that the scholar who shares the Old Testament faith will alone be able truly to understand the Old Testament, yet none would admit that faith may properly introduce into the presentation of the subject conclusions which are not accessible to reason.

Most of the above mentioned works (Vatke is the notable exception) adopt the systematic or topical method of presenting the material, or a combination of the systematic and chronological methods. However, as early as 1829, Gramberg had published a *Kritische Geschichte der Religionsideen des Alten Testaments* which, under the broad headings of "Hierarchy and Cultus, Theocracy and Prophetism", adopted a purely chronological approach. Toward the end of the century, under the influence of the Vatke-Graf-Wellhausen School, this method of presenting the subject gained increasing favor and, while the name Old Testament Theology was retained for a while, as in the works of A. Kayser, Duff and Stade), these later works became in fact merely "Histories of the Religion of Israel" and in still later works the former term was dropped in favor of some variation of the latter.

However, the general acceptance of the chronological or genetic presentation of Israel's religion did not lead to the complete abandonment of the older topical or organic method, even amongst disciples of

the Wellhausen school. In Germany, Old Testament theology in the older sense continued to be cultivated by Dillman, Schultz, Piepenbring and Koenig, and, at last, in England, by Bennett, Davidson and Burney, though several of these works came to terms with the new approach by prefixing a historical section to their general discussion. Thus at the beginning of the third decade of the twentieth century the two disciplines stand, at least in theory, side by side. Old Testament theology and the history of the religion of Israel. Both issue from the same roots, both use the same tools, historical and critical exegesis, both have the same ultimate purpose, to display the nature of the religion of Israel as a fact of history. They differ only in the manner in which they present the material. The one presents it under the aspect of historical development; the other presents it under the aspect of organic unity.

But though in theory these two now independent disciplines, the history of the religion of Israel and Old Testament theology exist side by side, it is a simple fact that during the first quarter of the 20th century Old Testament theology led only the most tenuous of existences. The whole of scholarship was dominated by the concepts of evolutionary naturalism and the overwhelming majority of scholars regarded the history of the religion of Israel as the only satisfactory approach to the subject and assumed that it had come, not to complement, but permanently to supplant, the systematic, topical and organic method. With the exception of two works in English which did not bear the title of Old Testament Theology and dealt only with certain aspects of the subject (H. W. Robinson's *Religious Ideas of the Old Testament* and A. C. Knudson's *The Religious Teaching of the Old Testament*) the only work of importance to appear was E. Koenig's *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, an eccentric work whose crotchets could serve only to confirm the opinions of those who

believed that Old Testament theology was dead, and who saw no reason to lament its passing.

The renaissance of Old Testament theology was due, no doubt, partly to the inevitable swing of the pendulum and partly to the dissatisfaction of the post-war generation with the concepts of evolutionary naturalism. The world was at last convinced that evolution is not necessarily *upward* and had begun to doubt the universal validity of the evolutionary approach to the historical sciences. In the Old Testament field this expressed itself in a definite reaction against the philosophical aspects of the Wellhausen reconstruction of Israel's religious development, although, of course, it in no way affected those parts of the theory which were based on solid critical judgment. It was only natural that eventually this reaction should manifest itself also in dissatisfaction with the attempt to present the religion of the Old Testament in purely genetic and chronological terms. There became evident a desire to know something more about this religion than the fact that it had passed through some four, five or six phases of development, to know what were the abiding principles of Old Testament religion and what was its structural unity. This renaissance began in the early twenties and found most lucid expression in Steuernagel's essay, in the Beiheft for 1925 of the *Zeitung für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, entitled "Alttestamentliche Theologie und Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte", in which he enters a moderate and well-seasoned plea for the renewed cultivation of the method of old Testament theology. He gives three reasons. The first is that students of general religious science and of religious philosophy ought to have some place where they could turn for a knowledge of the principles of Old Testament religion and of its distinctive attitudes toward the great subjects of all religion. Secondly, the student of the New Testament or of dogmatic theology is entitled to be able to turn to



some one place where he may find how any particular topic has been dealt with in Old Testament religion, without the necessity of himself embarking upon tedious and unfruitful historical studies. And, finally, the very nature of Old Testament religion, as of any religion, involves certain elements which are *essentially* timeless, and others which cannot be placed in time because of the uncertainty of the sources. These yield better to the method of topical discussion than to that of chronological arrangement.

So far all is perfectly clear, and it should be emphasized that the important volumes on Old Testament theology which have appeared under the names of Sellin, Eichrodt, Köhler and Heinisch are all attempts to realize this program. However, at the same time there was another movement, a new and enthusiastic revival of interest in the *theological significance* of the Old Testament — its significance for Christian theology and for the specific theological needs of the contemporary world. This movement received its chief impetus from the circles of the Crisis Theology, but also expressed a growing conviction amongst Old Testament scholars that their subject was not one of merely antiquarian interest, but of vital contemporary concern. This movement in Germany is connected especially with the names of Kittel, Staerk, Eissfeldt and Vischer and has become increasingly influential among younger scholars in our own country. It seems most unfortunate, however, that this movement should have been confused with the demand for Old Testament theology. As nearly as I can discover, the confusion has its origin in an article by Eissfeldt in the ZAW for 1926, "Israelitisch-jüdische Religionsgeschichte und alttestamentliche Theologie". In this article he distinguishes between "the history of the religion of Israel" and "Old Testament heology" by asserting that the former is a historical-critical science which studies Israelite religion as a historic fact by the methods of other historical sciences

while the latter, through the unique organ of faith, studies only those elements of Israelite religion which can be regarded as the revelation of God. Old Testament theology and the history of the religion of Israel are thus independent disciplines using different and incompatible methods, those of faith and those of reason, and therefore move in parallel lines which can never meet. He declares that the faith, confession or church to which one adheres will determine the content of his particular theology of the Old Testament and that therefore there will be as many different theologies of the Old Testament as there are creeds. Such a definition of Old Testament theology is directly contrary to the traditional definition of the discipline (which began rather as an effort to rescue the Old Testament from the domination of confessional theology) and it can lead only to quite justified suspicion of the whole subject. Fortunately this misinterpretation of the subject was not allowed to stand unchallenged. Eichrodt, in an article in the same journal in Vol. 47, 1929, arose to defend the view that Old Testament theology is a strictly critical and historical science. He presupposes that the Old Testament theologian *will* be a man of faith, but in his studies he will make no use of any method not available to other historical sciences. His task is not that of making existential or value judgments, but merely that of describing the religion of Israel as an historic fact, not in its chronological development, but in its structural unity.

It may seem that I have devoted too much of my time to this historical survey, but it seems to me a matter of primary concern that we should know what we are talking about when we speak of Old Testament theology. I am myself thoroughly convinced of the importance of the theological approach to the Bible. Old Testament science needs to be rescued from the hands of scholars who are merely linguists, archaeologists, and historians, and restored to the



hands of those who are theologians as well. But the theological approach to the Bible is not biblical theology. The theological interpretation of the Bible is not a discipline at all and stands in no need of precise delimitation. It is rather an *attitude*, one which should pervade every branch of Old Testament studies. It is an attitude of faith, of wonder, of profound reverence, a feeling that one is standing on holy ground and dealing with holy things. The theological attitude toward the Old Testament is one which can enrich and deepen every subject with which it deals — Old Testament Introduction, Old Testament History, the Religion of the People of Israel — and even Old Testament Theology itself!

In the remainder of this paper, I should like to speak briefly of the imperative need for Biblical scholarship to cultivate Old Testament theology in the historic sense of that term. Scholarship in no field has reached its goal until it has presented its material in such a form as to be accessible and intelligible to serious scholars in other related fields. This is, in fact, the first point made by Steuernagel in the article referred to above. However, we as teachers of the Bible, will not be so much concerned with what he calls students of religious science in general as with our own students in college and seminary classes. Most of them, I suspect, are bewildered by such knowledge of the Old Testament as they have obtained. They have learned that Israel's religion passed through many stages of evolution and know something of the political, economic and cultural factors involved. They have studied the history of Israel's religion in terms of great creative personalities. They have learned of the contents of the various books, the curious and confusing way in which they have attained their present form and the multitude of hands which have contributed to the making of them. They have become familiar with certain great passages of so-

norous prose or poetry and occasionally have caught some hint of their meaning. They have learned many strange and fascinating things about obscure aspects of Hebrew religion and have perhaps been a little confused by textbooks which in following the development of the subject, devote 16 pages to demonology and 10 to the eighth-century prophets. They have learned about nomad religion, peasant religion, prophetic religion and legal religion — but never about the religion of the Old Testament. Or is it possible that the term, "Old Testament religion," is just a convenient fiction, that its varieties are like beads on a string possessing no other unity than the fact that all the varieties occurred within one race and nation? Certainly few scholars would limit the unity which Old Testament religion exhibits merely to this.

If one wanted to understand what is the essence and inner nature of Christianity, he could not do it merely by studying church history, or the history of dogma or the lives of eminent personalities. All these studies are necessary, and more too, but somewhere one would have to come to grips with what Christianity really *is*, not merely its tensions and varieties, but that inner unity which binds together all Christians of whatever name or creed — those things which have in some sense been believed by all Christians, in all places and at all times. In its reference to the Christian religion, this kind of study is what we call systematic or dogmatic theology. In reference to Hebrew religion, it is called Old Testament theology. It attempts to show the student what the Old Testament has to say about the great problems which are basic to all religion — the nature of God and his relation to the universe, the nature of man and his relation to God, the meaning of life and death, the nature of the good life, the way in which God works in history and the character of that far-off event toward which creation moves.

The greatest practical need of Old Testa-

ment scholarship today in the English speaking world, at least for these scholars who are primarily engaged in teaching, is an adequate book on this subject. Davidson's *Theology of the Old Testament* is merely a collection of papers on various subjects, arbitrarily arranged by an editor after his death, and much of it is pretty dreary reading. Burney's little book, *Outlines of Old Testament Theology*, is a model of its kind as far as it goes, but it makes no pretense at going very far. There remain Wheeler Robinson's *The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament* and those parts of Fosdick's *A Guide to Understanding the Bible* which deal with the Old Testament. But none of these professes to deal with the whole compass of Old Testament religion and one has only to compare them with such a work as Eichrodt's *Theologie des Alten Testaments* to see how truly poverty-stricken English and American scholarship is in this tremendously important field. However, a mere translation of Eichrodt will not meet the need. Magnificent as much of his book is, it is frequently ponderous, and, especially in the third volume, unduly subjective. What we need is a volume by an American scholar for American students which will have something of the breadth of vision and the profundity of insight which Eichrodt has at his best. If one seeks a model for such a work, the most satisfactory work which has yet appeared is the *Theologie des alten Testaments* of Paul Heinisch, a Roman Catholic work published at Bonn in 1940. Making due allowances for the restrictions imposed by the Pontifical Biblical Commission, as well as by the religious convictions of the author, it is an excellent type of what such a book should be, broadly and simply organized, exhaustive in its scheme of documentation, lucid in its style and critical in its judgments.

Until such a work appears in English, those of us who are teaching the Old Testament will have to compose our own Old Testament Theologies. Those who have not studied the Old Testament in this way will find it not only a useful exercise for the benefit of their students, but a highly refreshing and stimulating task for themselves. If one will approach Old Testament religion looking, not for fragmentary bits of knowledge, but for that organic unity which underlies it and which gives vitality to its various forms of expression, he will find that out of the multiplicity of phenomena a design and pattern will gradually emerge — a pattern which is not simply that of the so-called religion of the prophets, a religion which could never be more than the possession of a precious few, but a pattern which includes prophet and priest and wise man and the humble devotee at the shrine. And perhaps it is not presuming too much to suggest, by way of anticipation, that, when that pattern does appear, at the center of it will be seen *the character of Israel's God*. And, if this is true, then, as we study the theology of the Old Testament, we shall also deepen our theological understanding of the Old Testament, for when we finally come to know the God whom Israel loved and served in history we shall know that he is the same God whom we ourselves have loved and served and whose glory we have seen in the face of Jesus Christ. It is as we reach this point that we shall begin to see the *theological significance* of the Old Testament in its proper perspective, and it is, I am convinced, only as we approach the subject from this standpoint, that of the theology of the Old Testament itself, that we can achieve a *theological interpretation* of the Old Testament which will be something more than uncritical theologizing.

# A New Testament Student's Approach to Biblical Theology

FLOYD V. FILSON

IT is significant that we are discussing biblical theology. That was once the unifying concern of biblical scholarship. Then, due largely at least to a vivid sense of successive stages in historical development and to the greater degree of specialization demanded by increased materials for study, it became usual to consider each Testament as an independent unit. The biblical scholar could discharge his full duty by writing a theology of the Testament in which he specialized.

This development would have pleased Marcion, the second-century champion of the view that Christianity was a completely new faith and hence required a radical break with the Scriptures and teaching of Judaism. But the ancient Church rightly rejected Marcion's position as untrue to the origin and nature of Christianity. It is a fatal fallacy to treat the Testaments in isolation. Such separation permits the attainment of substantial results in the area of language, literary problems, and historical events, but when the message and ultimate meaning are in question, compartmental scholarship breaks down. One thing greatly needed today is the development of lines of study which deal with the full range of biblical teaching.

Thus it is important to treat the Bible as a whole, and our need is not to write a New Testament theology but to seek in the light of modern study of the Bible to work out a biblical theology. It is my purpose to state first what I consider implied by the term biblical theology, and then to point out features which to me as a New Testament teacher are essential in the structure of that theology. What, then, does the term biblical theology imply?

1. *First of all, it obviously deals with the Bible. It affirms the validity of the process which set these writings apart in one group.* In recent decades it has frequently been asserted that the conception of the Canon is artificial and misleading. It has been argued that the only thing we can do is to consider these books as individual writings which are to be treated just as we do other writings of that time.

Like most trends of scholarship, this development has a measure of justification. Questions of text, grammar, authorship, and literary qualities are subject to the same methods of study which we apply to other ancient writings. But the implicit conclusion has crept in that these books taken together have nothing unique and distinctive to say, and that the Church was wrong in putting them in a collection which was to be permanently central in its life.

Those interested in the renewed emphasis on biblical theology consider that these books rightly deserve special grouping. Such students, if alert, accept every tool of historical study, but they hold that these books were legitimately set apart. The classic, creative writings of the Judaeo-Christian stream are here. No debate about the fringe books should obscure the conviction that this group of books is needed to put us in touch with the basic Christian heritage, and that there are no other books which we need to get the authentic substance and tone of that perennially fresh message.

2. *Implied in what has been said is the conviction that in these books, rightly and adequately interpreted, is one basic message.* Differences are obvious and numerous. They are to be noted and respected, for they not

only exist, but also say something, namely, that the message of God comes to men in varied ways and through different personalities. Talk about differences, however, can go so far as to deny the presence of a basic message in the book as a whole. I recognize that the affirmation of unity will be disputed, but I consider it defensible and also essential to the conception of biblical theology. It not only affirms that in each Testament the remarkable variety exists within the framework and atmosphere of one common stream of truth and life, but also maintains that the Old Testament is understood in its full and divinely intended sense only when it is brought into relation to the Christian Gospel presented in the New Testament. It finds that the New Testament's basic bond is with the Old Testament rather than with Hellenism.

3. *The conception of biblical theology has the further significance that it directs attention to what God has done.* Much Bible study examines man's concepts of God, the world, and human life. The word "theology" suggests that we are dealing with the reality of God and his doings. Those who take an interest in biblical theology are concerned to be faithful to the fact that the entire Book regards God as the basic axiom and moving power of its entire story. The center of biblical interest is not man's experience and thought; it is what God declares, demands, and does. Vital study of this field cannot proceed as though God did not exist.

4. *To speak of biblical theology draws attention to the normative note of the biblical message.* This does not mean that the Bible is normative without interpretation and application. Nor does it mean that a clear statement of biblical theology will free the Church or the individual from the responsibility of working out a theology expressly relevant in the present situation. But the reference to a normative note does imply two things. It calls attention to the urgent, demanding note which is so recur-

rent in the Bible. This is not objective history or cool contemplation. There is a note of challenge and judgment. This is a book which claims to present the truth and demand decision about the ultimate issues of life. No presentation of the biblical message which fails to convey that imperious and persistent claim has any right to be considered intellectually adequate or true.

The term biblical theology also implies that regardless of all our added study and experience, there is a basic message in the Bible which we never outgrow, which offers light and direction on the crucial affairs of life, and which therefore neither the leading of God's Spirit nor the experience of men will antiquate or annul. Without excluding later study and insights, but rather fostering them, this book continues to speak to every generation in judgment, mercy, and guidance. Those who are unsatisfied with references to the religion or religions of the Bible or the New Testament, and who therefore use by preference the expression Biblical theology, are moved to do so by the feeling that this latter term suggests the note of permanent relevance which they sense in the Bible.

It may be contended that such a description of the nature and scope of biblical theology lays bare a lack of objectivity, and entangles historical study with religious attitudes which should remain outside the area of historical scholarship. Such an objection seems untenable in two respects. It is not possible to carry on historical study without assuming an attitude toward the nature of the world in which we live. An element of interpretation is inherent in all historical study, and in the most significant area of religion the rôle of personal evaluation and response is particularly marked.

Furthermore, the task of intelligent study is not complete until it brings its work into relation to faith and life. Historical study and personal faith are not mutually exclusive and need not be hostile; each makes a



contribution to the total activity of the other. In view of the ultimate, personal issues which the Bible contains and the commanding tone in which it treats those issues, biblical theology is inevitably a work in which intelligent study and responsible personal attitude meet in fruitful collaboration.

If now we come to the New Testament with this attitude, what will we say are the aspects of biblical truth which stands out as centrally important and worthy of emphasis?

1. *The working of God in history.* It is characteristic of the biblical point of view that practically never is it troubled about the existence of God. That is taken for granted. Nor is the Bible's main purpose to answer intellectual questions about God. It rather presents him as the active Creator, Director, Judge, and Redeemer of human life. All else is subordinate to this; to study the Bible means to come to grips with this faith. He makes himself known in action and his working relates to the lives of persons and peoples.

Israel is presented as his chosen people. The history of Israel is therefore central to the Bible story. Though God's relation to other peoples is early noted, and wider outlooks emerge clearly in later days, the rôle of Israel is never obscured. There finally arises the expectation that through Israel God will do something decisive for the world. The New Testament says that he did so in Christ and the Church.

The Gospel story is therefore vitally linked with the working of God in Israel; it needs this story of the past to be understood and interpreted. Moreover, this entire story is significant for all further working of God in history, since its climax, the sending of Jesus Christ as the unique embodiment of God's character and will and the rightful claimant to man's loyalty, was a decisive act of permanent effect. The sense of a powerful, new, and decisive action of God in the coming of Christ is represented by the convictions that the Kingdom began

in his work, that the Spirit has come in a new way upon the Church, and that life in a new and vital sense is now available through faith in Christ. Here is continuity with the old, emergence of the new, and establishment of a point in God's working in history towards which believers will always look back with recognition of its decisive significance.

2. *The importance of the historical Jesus.* Central in this working of God was the full career of Jesus Christ. It was at once the realization of the deepest hopes of Israel and the fresh, unique expression of the purpose and will of God in human life and history. It is the special glory of the Synoptic Gospels that they keep this historical figure before the reader of the Bible. No writer of the New Testament completely lost sight of the earthly life of Jesus, but some of them emphasized other factors so much that only the presence of the Synoptic Gospels gives balance and permanent power to the total New Testament witness.

From the importance of concrete historical happening follows the linking of historical study with biblical theology. Vigorous and honest historical study is a requirement inherent in the nature of the Christian message. If Jesus Christ lived a human life among the Jews of Palestine in the first century, and several documents bearing the stamp of the mind and methods of that time hand on to us this story, then careful historical study becomes the obligation of every intelligent Christian as well as of every other person who seeks to know who and what Jesus was.

This necessity, however, places no little burden on the modern exponent of biblical theology. As long as that theology was conceived mainly in terms of great ideas, the problems of history did not appear to be so troublesome a factor in the statement of biblical truth. But when the true nature of God is held to be revealed principally by his working in history, and particularly in one individual of an ancient subject people



which lived at the meeting place of various cultural streams, the pathway to a satisfactory biblical theology appears more rocky. But there is no escape from the rigor of the task; it is precisely in the processes of history, the Gospel affirms, that God is revealed and known. Therefore we stand or fall with the historicity of Jesus and the substantial dependability of the records of his life and teaching.

It is rather widely held today that we cannot know the facts about Jesus, but can only know the faith of the early Church. Jesus himself, it is said, is permanently hid behind the interpreting faith of the Apostles, but we may rest content with this situation, because such a vital faith must have had quite a significant *x* behind it. I cannot take this position. We can never know all the answers we would like to have, but we do have to reach a solid basis of fact about the historical Jesus if we are to build a tenable biblical theology. Moreover, it is possible to reach that basis. It is my conviction, after trying honestly to follow the critical study of the gospels, that the historicity of Jesus is beyond question, and that the essential facts of his career and teaching are sufficiently known for us to say that we deal with a known historical figure.

3. *The centrality of the Cross.* It is clear that the Apostolic Church gave the Cross a prominent place in its message. But it is often asserted that this is a radical departure from the Old Testament and has no roots in the mind and utterances of Jesus. My conviction is rather that in both these respects true biblical theology can maintain the deep unity of the Bible.

The Old Testament shows that the people of Israel were much like the people of America; they did not want to suffer. But it shows that they did suffer and that they learned their deepest lessons through such providential events. They often saw in it a divine judgment on sins, and at times found occasion to leave the problem trustfully in God's hands. Indeed, rare spirits were

given to see that suffering might be a vicarious and socially redeeming experience. Not in bulk of words, but in the final result of history, there was a basis for the Cross in the story the Old Testament tells. It is clear from the New Testament that Jesus and his followers saw that strain of Old Testament truth.

The real test, however, is whether the Cross—undeserved suffering voluntarily accepted in a spirit of love and for the cause of God—was present in the mind, purpose, and obedience of Jesus. Here scholarship has often returned a negative answer, and given a picture of Jesus as a great prophet of God who was finally overwhelmed by forces which he had not fully foreseen or constructively interpreted. This conclusion involves the excision of a number of sayings in the gospels, particularly the words of Jesus at the Last Supper; it further involves the unconvincing assertion that Jesus lived in the atmosphere of gathering danger without grasping its seriousness or constructively relating the prospect of rejection with the sense of divine mission which impelled him to act as he did. Such a picture of a figure so helpless and futile in the presence of crisis it is neither reasonable nor right to accept.

Jesus did not start his ministry with any preconceived notion of its result. But just as the logic of history led the climactic spirits of Israel to see a mission in suffering, so Jesus faced the apparent dilemma posed by the deliberate rejection of his divine mission and worked through to the conviction that his suffering, voluntarily accepted in the cause of God, would prove a redemptive power in the lives of his followers. This lesson of life the Church then took up and greatly developed, but in doing so it did not begin *de novo*; there were roots in the Old Testament and in the mind of Jesus.

4. *The resurrection of Jesus Christ.* In no respect is the Christian Gospel more vibrant with new understanding and vigor

than in its witness to the resurrection. The Old Testament had little to say on this subject. Many a loyal believer in God had stubbornly wrestled with the forbidding fact of death, and looked for an explanation consistent with both reason and faith. But little light had come. This may have been providential; it drove Israel to center its life of faith in present trust and obedience. But that did not permanently satisfy, and the faith of Israel demanded a further word which would be true to the God they knew and would vindicate the righteous. Judaism developed the few bold Old Testament affirmations of resurrection into a more confident faith before the time of Jesus. He accepted this faith, and when confronted by the practically certain prospect of his untimely death, he knew it would not be the end. But the limited light the disciples received from him during his ministry changed into bright day with the coming of the Easter faith.

There are questions about what happened at that time, and for me some problems are more difficult because I am convinced that the leading disciples first met the risen Christ in Galilee. But I am ready to say two things. In the first place, the Apostolic Church was certainly founded on the resurrection faith; by this the Apostles meant, not that they had had a merely subjective experience, but that the crucified Christ had actually come into personal touch with them. In the second place, I accept as essentially true this affirmation that the living Christ vitalized his Church. The form of the experience was undoubtedly within the framework of their mind and time, but I am not satisfied with the idea that the disciples merely made a remarkable psychological recovery from what might have been a disaster fatal to the movement Jesus had started. I know that to say this is to put myself outside of a large circle of modern thought; my view will have possibility only to those who believe in a living God who acts with definite purpose in specific events

to give history meaning and to give men a Gospel.

5. *The power of the Gospel to meet man's need.* The Bible holds a high and a low view of man. It presents him as made in the image of God, morally responsible, and capable of knowing and serving God; so far it holds a high view. But it also reports frankly the wickedness and perversity of man and portrays the corruption of individual character and national life; it thus proves a realistic document which veils nothing of man's failure and need. That such wrongdoing calls forth God's condemnation and yet proves the occasion of his active measures to rescue man from his predicament is a repeated theme of biblical teaching, from the crude days of early history to the time of the central redeeming act of God in sending Jesus Christ to do for men what they were not able to do for themselves.

It is the biblical view that man rightly responds to this action by a humility and trust which befits God's creature who has failed and now gratefully realizes how much has been done for him. But what Protestant Christianity has not properly stressed is the power of God. By its stress on free grace, central though that truth is, it has often come perilously near to finding in the Gospel an alibi for failure rather than a power for new life. Yet what the Bible requires is obedience. The vigorous prophetic note which is characteristic not only of the Old Testament but also of the New, and which marks off the Bible as something different from any other religious literature, excludes the idea that grace consists of the lenient assurance that God does not care how men live. He cares so much that at great pains he had made it possible for men to escape the bonds of evil and receive adequate power with which to face life. The Gospel includes the note of moral victory.

6. *The Spirit-led Church the instrument of God's purpose.* The Bible never falls into deism; God makes his presence and power felt in life. The Old Testament points to the

working of God's Spirit in critical situations. In the New Testament this note is more prominent still, and receives varied expression. It was felt that in Christ God had "visited his people." Later, men like Paul felt direct divine guidance through the living Christ. But Christians usually spoke of the leading of the Spirit. They knew of God's working in the past; they hoped for future gifts of grace; but though they felt their unworthiness and God's transcendent greatness, they lived with a sense of God's present working by his Spirit.

Nowhere, however, is this life of faith divorced from the fellowship of the people of God. Scholars sometimes speak of the individualism of Jeremiah or Ezekiel. The term is a misnomer. These prophets never thought of the individual as free from the solid bond of membership in God's people. In the New Testament the fact that Jesus and the first disciples lived in the framework of Judaism has sometimes been overlooked, and the result has been to obscure the essential social bond which existed in the Christian group from the start. The evangelistic appeal of the Apostles has at times given the same impression of self-sufficient individualism. But the convert was won to take his place in the Church. The Spirit of God works through the fellowship and to strengthen the fellowship.

This life, be it noted, is a fellowship not only in worship and mutual support but also in common effort to extend the Church. The Old Testament, with many limits of outlook, rises early to the conviction that God's working and power are universal in scope, and it comes to the realization that Israel, as God's Servant, is to be a light to lighten the gentiles. The New Testament, in turn, develops this theme; it is essentially an evangelistic and missionary book. It reflects a church life prompted by the Spirit to reach other men with the Gospel.

7. *Hope in the presence of the unknown.* The Bible does not claim to present the whole story of God's working or the whole

truth about God's mind. We know, but only in part. In two respects inevitable limitation restricts what man can see and know. The future is beyond the ken of mortal man. Yet this fact, which might be considered ominous, is not allowed to prove so. There grows up a spirit of hope, which takes various expressions. In Israel it is most frequently hope for the nation and through it for its members. Rarely and only late is it hope for a rich future life. In the New Testament there reigns a steadying backward look at what God has done for men, particularly in Christ, but no amount of gratitude for this accomplished help ever takes the edge from the keen anticipation of the good things which God has in store for his people in days to come, especially in the life beyond. One feels an invigorating sense of expanding horizons. Thus the curtain which veils from us what lies ahead never dampens the faith of the biblical servant of God. He lives in hope.

Even in the present, however, the limitations of man's sight are real. That man cannot see and know all that is present to God is not forgotten in the Bible. The sense of mystery, which theology neglects at its peril, repeatedly makes itself felt. But the response to this enveloping sense of the inescapable mystery of man's life is not despair but trust. Man does not know all; he is often baffled and perplexed; at times he has serious questions to raise. Yet he has seen the hand of the Lord at work; he knows the presence and power of the Lord; in this God's world he can live in hope and walk by faith where sight is not granted his questioning eyes.

The Bible deals essentially with the action which in the history of Israel, in the coming of Christ, and in the Church of the Spirit, God takes to chasten and renew men and lead them into wholesome faith and fellowship. It is the task of biblical theology to take seriously this essential content of the Bible. In doing so it will not avoid the confessional

note which deliberately has been included in this discussion. Unyielding neutrality is alien to the biblical note of urgency. Biblical theology must combine honest and rigorous scholarship with a participating, evalu-

ating attitude. If the presentation of one person is at fault, as to some extent it inevitably will be, that is to be corrected by more accurate study and a more sensitive, obedient faith.



# The Theological Significance of Genesis

SAMUEL L. TERRIEN

THE PURPOSE of this address is to show that the book of Genesis is not primarily a national epic, but a religious treatise, the central theme and main ideas of which transcend the historical situations and environments in which its various authors lived. To emphasize the theological significance of Genesis is not only a legitimate task, compatible with a strict historical method, but also the imperative duty of the biblical exegete.

## I

To be sure, like many monuments of ancient literature in general and most of the Old Testament books in particular, Genesis is the result of collective writing. Literary critics have described the composite character of its authorship and the long process of its compilation. They have isolated, analyzed, dated, and characterized as its literary sources, various sequences of narratives and cycles of traditions. They have even recognized that each of these sources was in turn the result of editorial work, either written or oral, done by individuals or schools of storytellers and poets who represented specific and sometimes contradictory points of view concerning history, psychology, sociology, ethics, and religious beliefs or practices. Likewise, more recent students have observed that the materials used by these various authors or editors offer a remarkably wide range of literary forms, such as myths, legends, fragments of individual, tribal, and national biography or lore, excerpts from genealogies, quotations of ancient folk songs, ditties, proverbs, oracles, and local sayings of aetiological interest. This analytical work is most valuable, for it enables the historian to reconstruct with a relative

degree of certainty the chronological development of the religion of Israel over a period of a thousand years or more.

In many ways, Genesis resembles a mediaeval church which was built on the foundations of a Gallo-Roman temple dedicated to the goddess Isis: the stones of its crypt reveal the signs of Byzantine art, the columns of its apse are in pure Romanesque, the vaulting of its transept and nave show the grace of middle Gothic, its Western rose window displays the wealth of the Flamboyant, and even one of its portals, which fell during the XVIIIth century, has been rebuilt in the Baroque style. In spite of its composite origin, this edifice is not an architectural monstrosity. It possesses a distinctive personality, it offers an esthetic message which is wholly its own, and it must be interpreted and understood as a single work of art. *Mutatis mutandis*, the book of Genesis as it exists today may represent several schools of widely different or conflicting conceptions of ethics and religion. Nevertheless, its final editor has succeeded in presenting a relatively homogeneous document, with a singleness of purpose, and a dominant message which overshadows the discrepancies of details.

Whatever sources may have been incorporated within its frame, whatever traditions may have been preserved in its chapters, whatever historical, psychological, sociological, moral, and religious points of view may still appear in its pages, Genesis exists as a completed masterpiece, polished and rounded, whose unity of theme and plan offers a striking contrast with the loosely connected, ill-digested, and sometimes chaotic agglutination of literary deposits which are found in other sections of the Hexateuch.

Genesis is more than an anthology of scattered pieces preserved for the sake of antiquarian reverence. After all, an agent was responsible for the definitive intertwining of the JE documents on the one hand, and of the Priestly story on the other. Therefore, after having analyzed the sources, the exegete must give an account of the finished product as it now exists, and formulate the teaching which emerges from the book considered as a literary unit.

## II

In spite of its composite origin and of its literary complexity, the first book of the Bible unfolds one large theme, and it describes primarily neither the creation of the world, nor the origin of man, evil and history, but rather the relationship of God with man. This relationship is presented both ideally and historically in a threefold way: *first*, the cosmos was created by God for the sake of man's life and happiness; *second*, man is lost whenever he refuses to trust in God; *third*, God is determined to save man through a human agency, the people of Israel.

These three basic ideas are developed and organized according to a master plan comparable to an articulated line with a descending segment which displays the state of man's perdition (chapters one to eleven) and an ascending segment which reveals God's plan of salvation (chapters twelve to fifty).

In the first place, God is the author of the cosmos, of life, and of man. By preserving side by side two different versions of creation, the editor of Genesis subtly suggests that his purpose was not to provide a scientific account of the origin of the world conceived as an historical event, but rather to show that the God worshipped by Israel transcends the universe and is the ruler of an organized nature. At the same time, the cosmos is not an end in itself. In both stories, the appearance of man is presented

as the climax of the creative process and his exact position is carefully situated in relation to nature on the one hand and to the deity on the other. Man receives dominion over a world of nature that is characterized as "very good indeed" (i, 31), but even in his ideal status, man is not to be confused at any time with the creator. In the Yahwist version, the *adham* comes from the *adhamah* (ii, 7), not a divine substance, but dust. This pessimistic anthropology is not corrected by the Priestly idea of the *imago dei* (i, 26) which now precedes the Yahwist story. Indeed, the Priestly writer as much as the Yahwist wants to prevent any confusion between divine and human levels of existence. Man is made in the image of God, so that he may rule over the animals, but the emphasis, through the use of two words, *selem* and *demuth*, lies in the likeness, the similarity, the resemblance, thereby excluding categorically the identity or the consubstantiality of man with the divine. Furthermore, this conception of man and nature is merely ideal and does not correspond to historical reality. For the human situation, according to the editor of Genesis, is not one of blissful innocence, but one of psychological alertness which is directly connected with a curse of both *adham* and *adhamah*. The interpreter of the book as a whole has no right to consider the Priestly idea of *imago dei* without taking into consideration the Yahwist account of a cursed man and nature.

In the second place, the editor of Genesis shows that man's historical situation is one of self-will, self-consciousness, and therefore of religious revolt. It is an act of disobedience which reveals to man his true nature. Man does not become conscious of himself unless he refuses to depend with complete faith upon his creator and provider. The sin of man in the garden is not a moral mistake, but a religious offense, a crime of high treason. It is through a lack of faith that he becomes conscious of his existence as an individual, and it is through

a disruption of an ideal relationship with his creator that the creature becomes aware of the existence of this relationship. By eating the forbidden fruit, man casts a doubt not only upon the legitimacy of the prohibition, but also and especially upon the attitude of the creator towards the creature. Through this act of self-assertion, man erects himself as a judge of the deity's motives, he manifests his autonomy from the divine, he commits an attempt against the sovereignty of God. He wants knowledge and understanding, and he discovers only that he is utterly destitute, physically and spiritually naked. The myth of paradise lost provides the typical description of *hybris*. Man wants to become like God. He resembles Lucifer who said in his heart, "I will make myself like the Most High" (Is. xiv, 14), or the king of Tyre who pretended to be divine (Ezek. xxviii). Man is a sinner whenever he attempts to bridge the distance which separates the divine from the human realms, with the paradoxical result that his attempt precisely destroys his harmonious communion with the deity, source of bliss and happiness.

It has often been said in modern times that the story of paradise describes the origin of sin, but does not teach the doctrine of original sin as it appears in St. Paul or in IV Ezra, especially vii, 118, which reads, "O thou, Adam, what hast thou done? For thou it was that sinned, the evil is not fallen on thee alone, but upon all of us that come from thee!" To be sure, the doctrine of the transmission of sin by physical generation or psychological example is not explicitly taught in Genesis, but it certainly is implied by the Hebrew notion of corporate personality. The human race is a whole in space as well as in time. For the Genesis editor as well as for the Yahwist author, the separation of man from God in the garden applies to mankind in general. The segment of the line which descends from chapter one to chapter eleven describes with some fluctuations a constant process of disintegra-

tion. The murder of Abel leads to the madness of those who attempted, with the building of a high tower, the ascension of heaven. Separation of man from God becomes the essential characteristic of the nature of man in history. Sin is not represented as a succession of independent, unrelated, rebellious actions, a casual recurrence of crimes, but as a state which has its core in the very personality of man. "And Yahweh saw that the evil of man was great in the earth and that every impulse (*kol yeser*) of the thoughts of his 'volitive-mind' was only evil continually" (vi, 5).

In the third place, with the twelfth chapter, the editor of Genesis introduces the theme of mankind's salvation through the gratuitous election of Abraham and of his posterity. The promise, repeated five times (xii, 2,3; xvii, 6-8; xviii, 18; xxviii, 13,14; xxxv, 9-12), is made without consideration for the worth or the achievements, either of the patriarchs or of their descendants. In fact, the fathers of Israel are realistically appraised. They are men of faith, but their weaknesses and failures are not concealed. In the selection and organization of his materials, the editor manages to provide dramatic contrasts which in themselves depict the misery of the heroes: Abraham obeys the call in the grand manner (xii, 1-9), and in the next pericope (xii, 10-20) shows that he is nothing but a coward and a liar. Jacob sees God face to face (xxxii, 30) but when the sun rises he halts upon his thigh (xxxii, 31). Joseph boasts of his dreams of superiority over his brothers and they hate him (xxxvii, 1-11). Nevertheless, he is truly superior to them, and by inserting the story of Judah and Tamar (xxxviii) immediately before that of Joseph and Potiphar's wife (xxxix), the editor once more provides a dramatic contrast which suggests that the principle of divine election is directly connected with high standards of morality.

These brief remarks do not claim to pre-

sent adequately or exhaustively the theological significance of Genesis. Their purpose is merely to indicate that the Old Testament student, without resorting to the use of allegorical, mystical, or even typological methods of exegesis, has the duty to extract from each book as it now stands the leading thread of its ideas. Furthermore, the book of Genesis itself should not be separated from its biblical context. It offers a basis for biblical theology, but a basis only. Its main doctrines of theology proper, anthropology, hamartiology, and soteriology, need to be completed and sometimes corrected by the teachings of the Prophets, of

the Wise, of the Psalmists, and for the Christians at least, of the New Testament. To take a single example, the doctrine of salvation in Genesis remains throughout ambiguous, since the five promises are either strictly nationalistic, when they concern the inheritance of the land, or universalistic, when they include a blessing for all the nations of the earth. The doctrine of ecclesiology, particularly, can and should be based upon Genesis, but not upon Genesis alone. As its title implies, this is only the book of beginning, if not of history, at least of theology.



# The Revised Standard Version

CLARENCE T. CRAIG

FEBRUARY of 1946 will be notable in the history of the English Bible for it will mark the publication of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament. Members of the National Association of Biblical Instructors have been kept informed of the progress of this work, which was undertaken on the authorization of the International Council of Religious Education. George Dahl described the procedures in this Journal in May 1941. At the annual meeting of that year an entire evening session was given over to addresses by Dean Luther A. Weigle, the chairman of the committee, and by Dr. James Moffatt, who served as its secretary until the time of his death. The New Testament was practically complete two years ago, but war-time printing conditions made it impossible to publish before this month. Additional members have been added to the Old Testament section, but it is expected that four more years will be required before their work can be presented to Bible readers.

The conviction which has prompted this endeavor is the belief that the word of God should speak to all men in their own language. The competing conception is that the Holy Book should remain in words that are not to be changed. There can be no doubt on which side the early Church stood. Wherever the Gospel was carried, translations of scripture were made. Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, and Gothic versions testify eloquently to the desire that all men should be able to read the Bible in their own tongue. But this process came to a halt in the Western Church with the standardization of the Vulgate as the official Bible of the Roman Church. To our own day, this must be the basis for all

Catholic versions, even though the earliest Greek manuscripts are consulted.

One of the most important aspects of the Protestant Reformation was the impetus to put the Bible in the language of the northern European peoples. Luther's Bible was an imperishable monument and a milestone in the development of the German language. In England, from the time of Tyndale, there blossomed the greatest period of biblical translation which the world has ever seen. This came to its climax in the superb revision dedicated to James I. Undertaken to supplant the Puritan Geneva Bible and the Anglican Bishops' Bible, it gradually came almost to the place of a Protestant Vulgate in the English-speaking world. So much has this been the case, that millions assume that this version is *the* Bible. To change a single word of its text is to tamper with Scripture.

The readers of this Journal do not need to be reminded of the literary excellence of this version, nor of the qualities which have endeared it to many people. But no defender can contend that it is the language which we now speak. Its archaisms have nothing to do with Hebrew history or first-century Palestine. Its only "holiness" lies in its connection with Elizabethan England. This will not trouble those who believe that liturgy and Scripture should remain unchanged, even though the common speech moves onward. But those who believe that the Bible should speak to men in their own tongue realize that an official revision has long been overdue.

All biblical scholars are aware of an even more compelling reason for revision. The Greek text which lies behind the King

James version is the so-called *textus receptus*, a late corrupt form. It does not reproduce what the New Testament authors wrote. The Revised Version of 1881 did much to remedy that defect. But today we have still earlier and more extensive manuscript evidence and at detailed points judgments have been altered. Also, the nineteenth century revisers hesitated to take such radical steps as to exclude the non-genuine conclusion of Mark and the story of the woman taken in adultery in John. Yet, on the whole they succeeded in doing what they set out to do, to reproduce in imitation Elizabethan English the exact text of the most reliable manuscripts. Nevertheless, their version failed to win the affection of the English-speaking world and become our accepted Bible because of marked defects.

First, in imitating a speech which was not their own, the translators failed to attain literary distinction. Again, they followed the false principle that a translation should be an interlinear reproduction of individual *words* rather than a reproduction of *ideas* in our own idiom. In the years that have followed, other inadequacies appeared. The papyri discovered in Egypt revolutionized our knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar of Hellenistic Greek. By the time that Thos. Nelson & Sons turned over the copyright of the American Standard Version to the International Council in 1929, it was clear that a new version was called for.

Numerous private translations had appeared to fill up this vacuum. They have been of inestimable service, both in their intrinsic merit and also in breaking down the idea that the Bible was to be identified with a particular translation. But in the nature of the case they could not be fitted to become the Bible of the Church. Private versions introduced novelties to justify their own appearance, as well as to give a more accurate knowledge of Scripture. An official translation must stand in the tradition of the Church and offer a consensus rather

than the opinions of any one man. Both Edgar J. Goodspeed and James Moffatt took prominent parts in the work of the New Testament section and their previous experience was invaluable in the production of the Revised Standard Version.

It is impossible in the compass of a brief article to describe the work in any fulness or to discuss the problems which had to be faced. A 72-page brochure has been published to provide an *Introduction to the Revised Standard Version*. All of the living members of the New Testament section of the committee contributed chapters. This pamphlet is being circulated as widely as possible in order to assist reviewers and put essential material in the hands of those who can render valuable promotional assistance. It may be secured from your denominational publishing house or from Nelson's.

The objectives of this work should be clearly borne in mind. This should not be looked upon as one more modern translation. The work has been authorized by 40 denominations working through the agency of the International Council of Religious Education. The committees have labored untiringly to produce a version which will meet the needs of worship, of study, and of private Bible reading. Naturally no member of the committee is in position to give unbiased judgment on the degree of success which has been attained. But it is hoped that these religious bodies, through their official assemblies, will at an early date confirm their authorization of this version. At the request of the International Council, the writer of this article has been released temporarily from his academic duties in order that he may devote full time to a presentation of the version before all types of religious groups.

But the most valuable missionary work will be done by the Bible teachers who read this Journal. No one can be expected to approve a book which he has not had time

to study. You will first of all want to assure yourself that there has been faithful stewardship of the biblical scholarship of our time. You must expect to find some readings with which you disagree. Every member of the committee has a list of such, where he is sure that the majority of his colleagues are mistaken. But long arguments through the years did not convince a majority. You are just as free in your teaching to disagree with the Revised Standard Version as you are with the one which you are now using. Protestants do not admit that there is any body of experts whose judgment must be accepted without question. But I doubt if a committee of 100 would have come to essentially different conclusions than did the committee of 15; and a committee of 100 would be discussing the problems until 1975 if there were anything like the same kind of democratic participation.

The second thing which can be done by teachers is to adopt it at once for classroom teaching, and make it the required text of New Testament study. Inevitably, ecclesiastical bodies will move slowly. Also, adult Bible readers will not at once make a new translation their own. Many of them will always prefer the wording which they learned and read as children. Even the greatest enthusiast for the new version should not be disturbed by this. The problem of the religious educator lies with the youth who do not know any version of Scripture, who are biblically illiterate, and who find traditional versions stuffy and strange. The lesson committees, preparing outlines for the church-school literature, are recommending its adoption in the church curriculum just as soon as the publishers can make the adjustment. I cannot believe that the schools and colleges will lag behind.

Finally, every Bible teacher may render great service by interpreting the enterprise to the larger Christian community. The mass of our church people will have to be told why a new version of the Bible was

necessary and what its advantages are. The readers of this Journal can present this to various churches in their home area. Each must find his own way, but I do want to make two suggestions. First, we must strive to dispel the idea that this is a *new Bible*, or that a committee has been *revising the Bible*. As a matter of fact, this is an *old Bible*, for a much older text lies behind it than with the King James. Though some of the words are new, these changes were made not to revise the contents of the word of God but to give the original in a more understandable fashion.

My other suggestion is that the best way to commend the new version is to use it in teaching. Most laymen are not especially interested in technicalities, even those which we know to be important. There are limitations even in setting before them a series of isolated passages in order to show the improvements in the new version. They will not feel the full force of the arguments for change without knowledge of Greek. Like the man whom Jesus described, they insist, "The old is good." But in the study of a whole book like Mark or Galatians in the new version, a fuller appreciation of its value may be gained.

It is a matter of regret that the Synopsis of the Gospels using the text of the new version is not yet ready. It is hoped that a subsidy can be secured so that it can be sold at a figure sufficiently reasonable that it may be used by all college students and in many church schools. Features will be incorporated which are found in no English synopsis now available. It will follow the section numbering of the latest Greek Synopsis so that they can be used together conveniently.

The production of a concordance will have to wait upon the completion of the Old Testament. In the meantime, it is hoped that forthcoming commentaries on New Testament books will soon make the Revised Standard Version the basis for exposition.

Here is an enterprise which may attract a group of scholars and some enterprising publisher. While great tasks remain in the field of pure biblical scholarship I feel that our greatest responsibility today is to disseminate more widely what is already known

by the few, but not yet appreciated by the many. To help in the task of opening the treasures of the Bible to our age, the Revised Standard Version is sent forth. May it serve as a fitting instrument in the hands of the human interpreters of the Word!



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## BOOK REVIEWS

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### Post-War Religion

*Religion in the Post-War World.* Edited by WILLARD L. SPERRY. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945. 4 Volumes. \$1.50 per volume.

This series of four books, each of about 114 pages in length and containing viewpoints of five experts in their respective fields of interest, forms one of the best compendiums I have seen in its analysis and its answers as related to the post-war scene in the United States. Volume I deals with "Religion and Our Divided Denominations"; Volume II with "Religion of Soldier and Sailor"; Volume III with "Religion and Racial Tensions"; Volume IV with "Religion and Education." Since the writers are from different fields of thought and represent diverse philosophical approaches in their areas of specialization, the twenty chapters stimulate the reader to a wide creative "feel" of our contemporary complexities. No static blueprints will be found in these volumes, but suggestions for action as well as spurs for individual thinking are here in rare abundance.

Dean Willard L. Sperry sets a high norm for the book when in the first chapter of the series he describes the disunity of today among our American church denominations. It is the finest analysis I have seen and ends with the note that unity of religious people is an anachronism since "the Constitution (with its stress on religious liberty) seems at times to render a clear solution remote, if not impossible." John LaFarge, S.J., views amity of denominations as coming through individual sympathies rather than through ecclesiastical organizations. John T. McNeill is melioristic about the rôle of Protestant Churches; he sees grave problems to be confronted; but

finds his ray of hope in the ecclesiastical ecumenicity of the present moment. Judaism is discerned by Louis Finklestein as heterogeneous because of its makeup of divergent social cultures, its language differences, its theological variances: yet Jews, along with others, in their association with men of consecrated brotherhood have a common purpose in building a "holy nation." Humanism's answer to the world debacle, according to Archibald MacLeish, will be heard from those who govern and from those who teach; these two groups will be the most effective in giving us a renewed faith in man.

Through the eyes of Paul D. Moody, Lucien Price, John E. Johnson, William D. Cleary, and Elisha Atkins we are shown our lesson from World War I and the period between the two wars as to how the returned service man should be treated; we see something of the religion of the raw recruit and how the chaplain ministers to service men during time of war. Faith for men under fire is not easy; for many men there is not a "religious problem"; for men under fire faith in and loyalty to their comrades is the primary thing. If men are to have religious faith, it must begin and end in prayer; religion for men under duress of battle is of the heart and not the head.

No social problem confronts us with more perplexity than that of racial schism. Clyde Kluckhohn says that "the churches can make a positive contribution by exposing the mythology of race . . . for race prejudice is, fundamentally, merely one form of scapegoatism." Education, as suggested by Everett Clinchy, ought to teach us that we need people of different races and viewpoints for our own security. Edwin Embree succinctly displays the Negroes as a social force in contemporary life; and he concludes that

"there is no Negro problem," for the real problem lies with Christians who refuse to be "Christian" toward minority groups. *Margaret Mead* describes how organized religion has dispersed racial unity; too frequently we have tried to live on the borrowed spiritual energies of a previous generation; "it remains to be seen whether the sheer spiritual challenge of developing a culture in which the age-old distinctions between different racial and cultural groups can be orchestrated into a pattern where each is given dignity, combined with the task of developing our place in a world society, may give new impetus to religion in America." *Bradford Abernethy* describes agencies which are working for interracial co-operation.

In his analysis of education and religion, *Alexander Meiklejohn* as a scientific humanist feels that education has shifted its loyalty from the church to the state as the central core of values. *Payson Smith* traces the attempt of our public schools to give religious instruction, the problems confronted, and the conclusion that we have taught moral virtues rather than religion; that the goals of religion in America have been kept as alive as in European countries where there has been formal religious instruction in the schools. *Howard Mumford Jones* feels that the churches, rather than the universities, must become alive if they are to retain the religious allegiance of the graduates from the state-supported institutions. *Victor Butterfield* evaluates the scientific humanism in its approach to religion; sees religion as a culture which must belong to all departments and all faculty members if effective on the campus of the liberal arts college. *Theodore Parker Ferris* concludes the series of essays by evaluating the various channels by which religion can be imparted to the modern man; and then he concludes that "the personal consultation is the crown of the school, the sermon, the group, and the liturgy."

My hope is that these small samplings

from the four volumes will invite wide reading of the entire books. The series would be excellent for study groups, since the style of the essays is uniformly graphic and clear. Every chapter overflows with stimulation for those who really want to do something practical about the contemporary world, especially in the United States.

THOMAS S. KEPLER

*Lawrence College*

### Religion in History

*Men Who Have Walked With God.* By SHELDON CHENEY. Illustrated. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.75.

Mysticism is a persistent theme in the study of religion. It has been treated philosophically, historically and psychologically. Interest in the volume before us, however, lies in the fact that it comes from the pen, not of a professional scholar in the field, but of a well-known writer on art and the theatre who cherishes an intelligent lay interest in the spiritual prophets of mankind. It is an unusual book, faithful to its subject but written with a strong sense of the value of narrative exposition. For the method is to tell the story of the mystics through the ages in selected representative biographies, sketching their environments and outlining relevant developments that link their several periods. The result is an informative, artistic portrayal, quite human and suggestive. It is a presentation after the manner of Will Durant in his *Story of Philosophy*, save that the subject is mystical insight.

Heroes of the story are chosen from a wide field. The philosopher-poet Lao Tse represents the emergence of mysticism in the golden age of Chinese thought. Buddha stands as India's most renowned mystic. From Greece appear Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato—a trio whose mystical tendencies come to full flower in Plotinus. St. Bernard and Meister Eckhart crown the Medieval Christian development. Fra Angelico is the

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amazing amount of material... This volume should be available for all students and teachers." — *Journal of Bible and Religion*. Illustrated. \$4.95

### **Christ and the Fine Arts**

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"Teachers of religion, whether clergymen or laymen, need this volume. There is no other like it. The author's interpreta-

tions are valuable adjuncts." — *The Churchman*. 90 pictures; 240 poems; 117 hymns; 75 stories. \$4.35

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*by Charles Joy*

"This 'new type of concordance' is an index of ideas bound in the Bible, not merely of words. It contains 25,000 texts arranged under 2,150 topics.

Used with discrimination, this will be one of the most useful in the minister's kit." — *Christian Century*. \$4.95

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saintly painter of Italy's Renaissance. Jacob Boehme is the mystical genius of the Protestant Reformation. Brother Lawrence is the inspired lay monk of France. Finally, William Blake, Poet-artist-mystic, looms in relief against the crass materialism of eighteenth century England. Of all these the lives and teachings are justly and impressively told.

A welcome feature of the book for the general reader is the author's easy, reflective style. Paraphrase, interpretation and quotation are mingled effectively in graceful prose to give the reader, not only knowledge about the personalities and their insights, but also some feel for the mystical mood itself. Contributory to the same end are the thirty-two illustrations adorning the text. These are expressive of spiritual themes by such masters as Ma Yuan, Lin Ting-kuei, El Greco, Fra Angelico, and William Blake. The total effect tends to be refreshing, consoling and inspiring. This is doubtless part of the author's intent, for more than once he indicates his judgment that in our profoundly agitated epoch mankind must not forget the art of its spiritual wisdom while dealing with the exigencies of outer circumstance.

Through the narrative itself no particular theory of mysticism is developed. Descriptive exposition with a minimum of interjected comment appears to be the rule. In an "Afterword," however, the author shares with his reader some of his convictions. Mysticism is the essence of the religious life. It is also the essence of our higher perceptions, sometimes in science, certainly in art and poetry as well. For those who have eyes to see it opens a "land of unimaginable majesty and radiance." In some degree everyone has this capacity; for every man has two selves, first the private or local self, and second the vaster, universal self, realization of which brings the peace of union with God. In some sense the story of those who have achieved this realization is the biography of God on earth.

A work of this character does not lend itself to the usual type of critical examination which is in order for strictly historical studies. Legends such as the meeting of Loa-Tse and Confucius may be passed for their symbolic value, as may also the many tales about the Buddha, woven by the piety of later generations. Choice of representative mystics might well be different for another writer with other interest, but that is beside the point. From his own angle the author has done well three things. Aside from omission of reference to Baron Von Hügel's great work on Catherine of Genoa in his *Mystical Element of Religion*, his reading list shows he has been at pains to consult the most reliable works in the field. He gives the reader a good introduction to the phenomena of mysticism through the centuries. He appeals to him to exercise the latent power of spiritual perception within him. It is a rewarding book.

CLARENCE H. HAMILTON  
*Oberlin Graduate School of Theology*

*Many Creeds, One Cross.* By CHRISTOPHER E. STORR. New York: Macmillan Company, 1945. 154 pages. \$1.75.

The author, who is archdeacon of Northam, Western Australia, in a series of lectures, on the Morehouse Foundation in 1943, approaches the religions of the world from the standpoint of a Christian who, while seeing many values in other faiths, finds in Christianity the perfect expression of the religious quest. His discussion of each of five great religious, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Confucianism and Shinto, includes a fairly concise statement as to the central teachings of those faiths, and their relation to the Christian faith.

In general, his very brief presentation of the central content of the religions is good. Obviously in so condensed a statement he cannot do justice to all the truth contained in any one, but he is essentially fair in his



dealing with them and highly appreciative of such values as he finds.

The book is not, however, a history of religion nor an objective comparison of religions even. It is rather an attempt to show in what way each of the religions, with all the good that it possesses, falls short of the ideal as found in the Christian faith. In his own words, "There are many creeds and there is but one cross," and the Christian cross epitomizes for him the heart of high religion.

The book should be useful, taken for what it definitely purports to be, the work of an honest Christian scholar confronting the faiths of the world with his own faith. That is a perfectly legitimate approach to other religions, so long as it does not represent itself as being an objective, historical or a comparative study of religion. Indeed, such books are greatly to be desired. It would be very helpful to Christians if some of the great Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and Confucianist followers would present each his own faith in comparison with the Christian faith. We of the Christian world might learn much from such a volume, for we should thus be able to see ourselves better as others see us, always a salutary experience for anyone in any relationship.

Such a book as this ought to be read by persons contemplating missionary service in any of the lands represented in the book, and it would serve admirably as a basis for discussion of the missionary enterprise and its function in thoughtful adult classes in the Christian church.

It is regrettable that the author did not include an index, and that he gives very little documentation for what he writes. The book would be much more useful had such helps been included.

CHAS. S. BRADEN

*Northwestern University*

### Philosophy and Theology

*Nature and Values.* By EDGAR S. BRIGHTMAN. New York and Nashville: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945. 171 pp. \$1.50.

Professor Brightman usually presents his evaluation of philosophical issues while they are important in the thinking of his contemporaries. The present volume, consisting of the Fondren Lectures delivered at Southern Methodist University in 1945, contains his criticism of contemporary religious naturalism. He begins by noting the perennial distinction between "natural man" and "spiritual man," and states that this opposition constitutes the basic issue of our day. He seeks to resolve the difficulty involved by defining both terms and then drawing the implications of the terms as defined.

He defines nature as "the realm disclosed to us through our sense perceptions," (p. 67) and value as "the experience of a realized ideal" (p. 73). If nature is the realm which we perceive, then personality and values are supernatural since they are not subject to immediate perception. These two definitions provide the basis for Brightman's rejection of naturalism as defined and his attempts to provide a secure foundation for the philosophy of personalism.

It may be observed at once that the significance of his argument depends upon his definition of perception. After stating that nature is the "realm disclosed to us through our sense perceptions," he proceeds upon the assumption that this means the realm disclosed to us *directly* or *immediately* through sense perception. This interpretation of nature would be rejected by every naturalist of any type. It reduces nature to the superficial and discreet objects sensed directly by observers. It eliminates from nature the acceptable explanations of observed sequences which are generally known as natural law. This interpretation of his definition of nature reduces naturalism to ab-

surdity. Of course, nothing in the volume makes such acceptance compulsory. If one is ready to accept this highly restrictive definition, the rest of the argument may sound plausible. If not, the reader will conclude that the argument is interesting but not convincing.

WILLIAM H. BERNHARDT

*The Iliff School of Theology*

*The Meaning of Human Experience.* By LYNN HAROLD HOUGH. New York and Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945. 367 pages. \$3.00.

In an earlier book Dean Hough developed the thesis of Evangelical Christian Humanism; it was titled *The Christian Criticism of Life*. This book is something of a sequel to that earlier writing; or perhaps, I should say, more of a development of its thesis through the eyes of the Hebrew prophets, the Greek thinkers, poetry, fiction, biography, history, and the Christ of the New Testament.

One of the most alluring experiences which any person can have is that of obtaining a "feel" of history, especially as he sees the Greek tradition joining hands with the Hebrew ideology in the early centuries of the Christian tradition. In language which is impressive and picturesque, Dean Hough describes this adventuresome travel of the mind for his readers. He knows how to use words as he tells about this mental tour, sometimes almost too well, yet always in such a fashion that the reading of the book never becomes dull. At all times I felt in this book Hough *the colorful preacher* telling us about a tradition which has captured Hough *the thinker*. One illustration will suffice to show what I mean: In his telling about Principal Peter T. Forsyth being one of the most intriguing dialectic theologians of this century he says, "His irony was so coruscating, his paradoxes

were so daring, and his style so redolent of explosive epigrams, that pedestrian thinkers were likely to find themselves first annoyed and then repulsed. But under all the pyrotechnics a first-class mind was at work, and an intelligence set against all forms of mental dishonesty and moral obfuscation."

The outline of this book is so wide and comprehensive that at times it almost resorts to an outlining of some segments of its developing thesis. But Hough has read widely and well, and along the pathway of his outline he mentions a number of books and men which will stir the thorough student to read deeply and thoughtfully behind the confines of this book. I would deem it a wise practice for one to read this book with the motive of filling in the outline with the books suggested. Certainly this would be a giant project in self-education!

The general thesis of Evangelical Humanism is succinctly stated by Hough: "The humanistic pilgrim must come to full consciousness of the meaning of the Cross. When humanism itself becomes evangelical, Athens and Jerusalem truly meet. The man who follows the world-wide lines of the inspection of the human, will come at last upon two great needs. One is the need for fulfillment. The other is the need for anti-septic surgery. . . . We can see how right was the insight of the Greek theology, that the incompleteness of the human is brought to fulfillment through the completeness of God. The Incarnation is the symbol and the actuality of the great fulfillment" (p. 241).

The contents of this book were given as The Third Annual Southwestern University Lectures at Georgetown, Texas, 1945. I wish that both scientific humanists and neo-supernaturalists might read these chapters, for they seem to restore a faith in *both* man and God; and it seems to me that neither can get along without the other!

THOMAS S. KEPLER

Lawrence College

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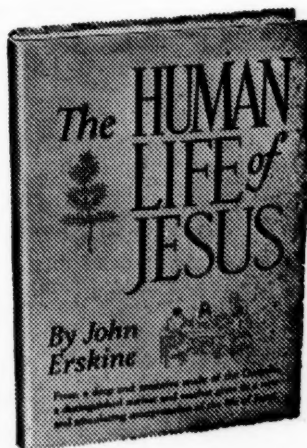
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*Kierkegaard's Attack Upon "Christendom."*

1854-1855. Translated, with an Introduction by WALTER LOWRIE. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944. xviii + 303 pages. \$2.50.

This volume contains the twenty-one articles which Kierkegaard wrote for the political daily, *The Fatherland*, and the articles, published serially, as *The Instant* which carried on the polemic. The articles precipitated much public controversy, contributing in the opinion of some biographers to the illness from which he never recovered. The reader will not find in this collection any new development in Kierkegaard's thinking. It represents instead the practical expression of his religious philosophy, his effort, as he put it, "to bring Christianity, the thought of Christianity, into the midst of life's reality and into conflict with its various interests." His aim was nothing short of revolution in accepted religious ideas and prevailing church practices.

Since the articles are largely negative and biting satirical, it is essential to keep in mind Kierkegaard's positive goal. To him institutional Christianity had lost the real meaning of the Christian life. It preached a gospel of inner peace, easily came to terms with the world, and was completely unaware of its own hypocrisies. Financed by the state, it was not in a position to assume its "protestant" rôle, that of criticism. In contrast Kierkegaard held that the Christian life from the subjective viewpoint was not the achievement of status but a process, marked by inner conflict, suffering, and striving. One was always in need of God's forgiveness and grace. From the objective viewpoint Christianity meant the rejection of wealth and secular interests and ultimately a breach with the world. The Established Church of Denmark thus made a mockery and an illusion of Christianity, and by so doing prevented people from understanding what the New Testament really means.

Kierkegaard waited long for the oppor-

tune occasion to make his stab at the Church. It finally came in the sermon which Professor Martenson preached upon the death of Bishop Mynster, the Primate of the Church. In his eulogy, Martenson referred to the late bishop as one of "the holy chain of witnesses to the truth which stretches through the ages from the days of the Apostles . . ." This was "the instant" for which he had been waiting. The late bishop had been held in high esteem by all as a good Christian and able official. To attack him for failing to be a witness to the truth of Christianity was to make the issue public and dramatic. From the polemic against the bishop, which is not to be interpreted as a personal attack, Kierkegaard next satirized the clergy, warning the "plain man" to shun "those abominable men whose livelihood it is to prevent thee from so much as becoming aware of what Christianity is." He then ridicules the assumption upon which a state church must rest, namely, that "everyone is a Christian" and that the nation is "Christian."

These vituperative diatribes develop no systematic argument. They repeat the same criticisms first from one perspective and then from another. The satire is biting and bristles with cryptic phrases. At times it becomes almost a caricature, sketching with the pen in much the same spirit as Daumier with the brush. That he presented a one-sided picture, Kierkegaard admitted to Pastor Bossen who visited him during his final illness. But retract he would not. "Do you think that I should tone it down, first speak to awaken, and then to tranquilize?"

There are only a few passages which reveal his persuasive or poetic qualities. But from many a page gleams the burning light of his awareness of the presence and the judgment of God. It is the contagion of his heart-searching honesty and fearless devotion to the truth which was in him rather than the particular issues of *The Attack* which constitutes the value of this volume for the average reader.

ELIZABETH P. LAM

Western Reserve University



## Christian Ethics

*Christianity and the Cultural Crisis.* By

CHARLES DUELL KEAN. New York:  
Association Press, 1945. XI + 211  
pages. \$2.00.

"This book is an attempt to present the Christian Gospel as the frame of reference that transcends history and supplies the perspective with which the historical problems of political economy, industrial relations, postwar employment, and international peace may be tackled." Mr. Kean, now rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Kirkwood, Missouri, and formerly instructor at Springfield College, has done more than just write another book on the importance of Christianity. He unites competent historical insight with a broad understanding of the intricacies of modern social problems. He is impatient of social solutions which are mere tinkering with social arrangements. For example, he writes: "As long as the basic premises of western civilization are unquestioned, we will have war, for it serves to point up the dislocation of modern culture. As long as the cultural problem itself is untouched, it will be no more possible to disavow military methods in the coming postwar era than it was to do so through the Kellogg-Briand Pact. . . . Those who would do away with war because of its destruction and bestiality must challenge its cultural basis—a situation that devalues men and values economics."

Mr. Kean holds that "The function of any religion in any culture is to inform men's individual and social attitudes, to serve as the integrating element for both individual and social life; in other words to set the spirit by which men live." He feels that the actual religion of America is not Christianity and he makes a careful analysis of the concrete details of our social situation to prove it. He makes an eloquent defense of the position that Christianity should be the orienting factor in American life.

The book is full of quotable sentences. It was a selection of the Religious Book Club.

J. PAUL WILLIAMS

*Mount Holyoke College*

*Economic Democracy and Private Enterprise.* By MICHAEL O'SHAUGHNESSY.  
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945.  
117 pages. \$2.00.

O'Shaughnessy believes in private enterprise and believes it can be preserved in America if essential adjustments are made. He points out that "mass production" depends on "mass consumption" and suggests ways of "financing consumption." He proposes a \$2800 minimum family wage and maintains that war-time levels of production and consumption can be maintained only if manufacturers will be willing to manufacture twice as much as they did in the pre-war years, but for the pre-war profit. O'Shaughnessy also urges the formation of a Supreme Council of Industries and Professions, authorized by Congress, chosen by the various vocational groups, for the purpose of advising and directing the Congress on the pressing problems of economic reconstruction. O'Shaughnessy is an economist who writes with real ethical sensitivity and insight.

J. PAUL WILLIAMS

*Mount Holyoke College*

*Freedom's People.* By BONARO W. OVERSTREET. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945. VIII + 115 pages \$2.00.

This is the kind of book about democracy which needs to be read widely; it is an excellent antidote to the conception which equates democracy with the kind of order we have at present in the United States. It is also an antidote to an excessively political definition of democracy. Mrs. Overstreet shows how democratic attitudes are reflected in one's social relationships—relationships in the family, the classroom, the office, the church. She shows how innate

good manners, caring for the feelings and circumstances of other people, buttress democratic living.

This book is by no means an adequate discussion of the range of problems which must be met if democracy is to survive in this country but it is a vivid introduction to points of view which are essential to the growth of democracy. "We Americans will never again be exactly as democratic as we have been, but will be more so—or less." Excellent collateral reading for classes in religion and social problems.

J. PAUL WILLIAMS

Mount Holyoke College

### The Bible

*The Tables of the Law.* By THOMAS MANN.

Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter.

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945. 63 pages. \$2.50.

This novelette is more than a mere paraphrase of the biblical story of Moses. Like the volumes on Joseph it is characterized by frequent interpretative turns and a philosophical under-current. Moses was really the son of Pharaoh's daughter. His father was a Hebrew slave who yielded to her lust. Amram and Jochebed were his parents only before men. This account of Moses' origin is made to do heavy duty in the interpretation of the plagues. All of these, with the exception of the last in which Joshua served as avenging angel, were commonplace natural happenings in Egypt. Accordingly, the plagues were of minor consequences in bringing Pharaoh to terms. His real fear was that Moses might divulge their kinship. In the desert wanderings Moses devised his laws right on the spot for purposes of control. On Mt. Sinai he invented the Hebrew alphabet for the writing of the tables of the law.

These examples indicate that Mann did not study sufficiently the complex matrix of cultural history which produced Moses and the folklore which clusters about his name.

However, in spite of its inadequacies of interpretation this novelette is fruitful reading. It gives a truly magnificent exhibition of the superb literary style and brilliance of narration which have brought Mann to the very pinnacle among contemporary novelists.

The philosophical undercurrent is to be found in Mann's portrayal of Moses as the universal type of the deliverer of the oppressed. He took a people sunk in the slough of barbarism and offered them a program for decent living which at least in its central principles was universal in applicability. Moses foresees that there will arise men who seduce the people to return to their barbaric ways. His curse on such a leader runs in part as follows: "Blood will flow in the streams because of his black stupidity, so that the red pales from the cheek of mankind, but there is no help, for the base must be cut down. And I will lift up my foot, said the Lord, and tread him into the mire—to the bottom of the earth will I tread the blasphemer, an hundred and twelve fathoms deep, and man and beast will make a bend around the spot where I trod him in, and the birds of the air high in their flight shall swerve that they fly not over it. And whosoever names his name shall spit toward the four quarters of the earth, and wipe his mouth and say 'God save us all!' that the earth may be again the earth—a vale of troubles, but not a sink of iniquity."

EUGENE S. TANNER

The University of Tulsa

*The Message of the New Testament.* By ARCHIBALD M. HUNTER. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1944. 122 pages. \$1.00.

Dr. Hunter finds the unity of the New Testament in its *Heilsgeschichte*. In the very fact of his quest for unity, appears a symptom of a turning point in New Testament studies—the desire for a grasp of the

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By Ralph Daniel Heim, *Lutheran Theological Seminary*. Intended primarily for college students as an aid to their general survey of Old Testament History and Literature. There are four major emphases throughout the materials; the literary, historical, biographical, and religious. Exercises can be used with any standard text. 55 exercises. **\$1.25**

## TYPES OF LITERATURE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

By the late Edward Chauncey Baldwin, *University of Illinois*. An opportunity to study the Bible as literature, with classification according to literary form. 218 pages. **\$1.25**

**THE RONALD PRESS COMPANY, Publishers**

15 East 26th Street, New York 10, N. Y.

New Testament as a totality. Dr. Hunter, while paying his respects to the analytical work of liberal scholars, believes synthesis to be more productive now.

The author sets forth the evidence which justifies, in his opinion, two conclusions. First, the New Testament writers exhibit an essential unity in their *kerygma*, Christology, Ecclesiology, and Soteriology. Second, in that unity the writers echo Jesus' statements about the meaning of himself, his purpose (the creation of a new people of God), and the relationship of his death to sin. Throughout, Dr. Hunter states that differences of thought, phrase, and treatment among New Testament authors do not mar that essential unity.

The book is informative and provocative. Chapter Eight, in its establishment of a basic rapport between Jesus and Paul on "sin," is an outstanding one in the treatment. Dr. Hunter knows, and uses in part, the thought of those who emphasize eschatology and the conclusions of others who employ form-criticism, but he allows neither interest to sway him from certain positions fundamental to his thought. Since he proceeds from many *a priori*s of conservative scholarship—the conclusions "accepted by the mass of sane and reasonable scholars" (to borrow a phrase used by Dr. Hunter in another connection)—the book will disappoint some. Particularly, will it disappoint radical scholars who, however sympathetic with the author's search, will judge that he begs the question by omitting *James* and *Revelation* and by employing much deduction where inductive procedures would seem more in order.

ROBERT M. MONTGOMERY

Cornell College

### The Christian Church

*The Coming Great Church.* By THEODORE O. WEDEL. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1945. ix + 160 pages. \$2.00.

This volume presents essays on church unity. The Episcopalian author is Warden

of the College of Preachers at Washington, D. C., and Canon of Washington Cathedral.

The main discussion begins by pointing to trends which promise to lead Christians to unite in The Coming Great Church. An instructive historical study shows that there has been a long neglect of the doctrine of the Church in Christian thinking, and that the Holy Spirit, which in the New Testament is seen at work in a corporate setting, has been too much thought of as dealing with individuals only. The Catholic-Protestant schism and disputes over authority, tradition, and liturgy are discussed. The closing chapter deals with Church order; it rejects the Roman Catholic and Tractarian view of Apostolic Succession, and defends Protestant denominations as truly Christian groups, but argues for the need of the historic episcopate.

A strong desire to seize upon the values of both Catholicism and Protestantism, and unite them in one Church, dominates the discussion. The necessity of the Reformation is fully recognized, but the losses involved in breaking away from formal continuity are keenly felt. Canon Wedel, in a sincerely friendly spirit of conciliatory mediation, seeks to bring Christians to unity on the basis of the total spiritual heritage of the past and in a framework of Episcopalian Church order.

My basic objection has to do with the position that "Church order is of the essence of church life" (p. 122), and with the implication in the contrast between "Episcopal Church order" and "denominational Church order" (p. 132). As the Anglican Canon Streeter recognized in his volume, *The Primitive Church* (1929), there is no definite Church order in the New Testament, but rather variety which furnished the seeds of different orders. Indeed, I would put it more strongly. Jesus, a layman, began a movement which had a deep continuity with Judaism but was a break with Jewish religious leadership. He chose lay helpers. I find in him no thought of unbroken "succession." To underline the point, in came Paul, a rank outsider, and



proved one of the outstanding leaders of Christian history. This New Testament picture negates the idea that continuous external order is of the essence of the Church.

Furthermore, when, as happened in one period, a Pope was immoral, I would say the spiritual succession owed more to devout peasants, monks, and family circles than to external order. Moreover, if, as Canon Wedel argues, the Reformation was a necessity, discontinuity was there more important than continuity of external succession.

In other words, while believing in a vital succession and feeling the need to work for greater unity in our day, I hold that though continuous external order can be fruitful in Christian life and fellowship, neither external continuity nor any one form of organization can be of the essence of the Church. The Church is free to unite under the guidance of the Holy Spirit on the basis of that order which preserves the spiritual heritage of the Church, provides effective leadership, and respects the priesthood of all believers. The details of that order need not reproduce that of any existing Church.

FLOYD V. FILSON

*McCormick Theological Seminary*

*They Found the Church There.* By HENRY P. VAN DUSEN. New York: Charles Scribner Sons, 1945. 148 pages. \$1.75.

The subtitle of the book, "The Armed Forces Discover Christian Missions," aptly describes it. The material is mostly taken from letters of service men all over the world in which they recount experiences that have brought them into contact with some of the direct results of the Christian missionary enterprise. It is a remarkable document; one of the most important *apologias* for Christian missions that has yet appeared.

Although the experiences narrated come from literally every section of the world, their testimony is almost monotonously uni-

form as to the effects that missions have had upon the people among whom the chances of war suddenly cast the writers. Dr. Van Dusen notes that the first impression is that of sameness. No matter where the experience occurred, there were first of all persons of unfamiliar culture but "of strangely familiar poise and strength, fidelity and grace; then *settlements* equipped with simple yet adequate instruments of health, education and worship, and *communities* marked by a character of life sharply contrasted with their surroundings . . . *then men and women of the West*, unpretentious, often modestly furnished by nature and circumstance, yet markedly similar and irresistibly impressive. With all of its diversity . . . the Christian World Mission . . . is unmistakably one . . . there is no other movement which thus encircles the earth and which is thus basically the same everywhere." There was also a no less obvious similarity, regardless of the denominational affinity of the group reported.

A further impression is as to the comprehensiveness of the Christian program and "the soundness of such a full orb'd ministry to human life. . . . If there are those who still cherish the caricature of a Christian mission as a solitary foreign evangelist exhorting naked savages to forsake their heathen faith and accept his beliefs, such an absurd misconception might well be consigned to the dusty repository of infantile toys and childhood legends." Also the rôle of the native Christian in the extension of the Church was a constant impression; as well as a strong sense of the worth of these outposts of World Christianity.

That many a serviceman has had his whole outlook on the missionary enterprise completely changed is evidenced by repeated declarations such as "I must entirely revise my whole attitude toward Christian missions." Another, "Back home we had no idea of the good missions were doing." "Gee, I certainly got a new angle on foreign missions. After having seen these people I

believe in foreign missions," and, "Now that I have seen, I sure am going to be a different Christian." It is just possible that the return of large numbers of men who have all unconsciously been conducting a second "laymen's inquiry," as Dr. Van Dusen suggests, may do something to arouse a more enthusiastic support of the world enterprise of the church than has been customary in recent years. Such an outcome is to devoutly be hoped for. Certainly the use of the stories in this little book could greatly add to the interest and appeal of many a minister's sermon, young people's service or missionary meeting. It ought to have a very wide circulation.

CHARLES S. BRADEN  
Northwestern University

### Judaism

*The American Jewish Year Book* 5705.

Volume 46. Edited by HARRY SCHNEIDERMAN. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1944. xxx + 620 pages. \$3.00.

*The American Jewish Year Book* 5706.

Volume 47. Edited by HARRY SCHNEIDERMAN and JULIUS B. MALLER. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1945. xxx + 760 pages. \$3.00.

The *American Jewish Year Books* supply an abundance of information pertaining to all phases of Jewish life. Perhaps their most interesting feature is the review each contains of the events of the year in the various Jewish communities throughout the world. The comprehensiveness of these reviews may be illustrated by listing the articles on the United States which are to be found in the second volume. They are as follows: Religious Activities, Educational and Cultural Activities, Jewish Social Welfare, Jews in the Armed Forces, Anti-Jewish Manifestations, Combating Anti-Semitism, Interfaith Activities, Reaction to Events

Overseas, Overseas Relief and Rehabilitation, Immigration and Refugee Aid and Zionist and Pro-Palestine Activities. This survey continues with almost equally extensive sections on the British Commonwealth, Central and Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, Palestine, Latin America and International Events. In addition to the review of the year each volume contains a number of special articles. Their variety may be illustrated by the following titles: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Jewish Crisis, Henrietta Szold, 1860-1945, Jewish Community Life in Latin America and French Jewry Under Nazi Occupation. This last named article by Jacob Kaplan, acting Grand Rabbi of France, should be required reading for all anti-Semites. Page after page of the Grand Rabbi's calm and objective presentation of the systematic destruction of French Jewry shows man's bestiality at one of its lowest ebbs in history. These reviews and special articles though produced by many writers maintain such a high standard of competence that one often has the pleasurable impression that they are a further installment of Elbogen's excellent book *A Century of Jewish Life*.

To list the contents of these *Year Books* would be tedious. Each reader will approach them with his own informational needs in mind. A brief sample of some facts the reviewer found pertinent will demonstrate their usefulness to the teacher of religion. While these volumes leave unanswered some of our questions as to population statistics, they go far toward giving the exact proportions of the European tragedy and the present distribution of Jewish people. Four out of five Jews in the Nazi occupied area of Europe were executed or died of starvation and disease. The result is that the pre-war world Jewish population of approximately fifteen and three-quarter million has been reduced to approximately eleven and one-half million. The estimated Jewish population of the United States in 1943 was 5-

199,200. The estimated Jewish population of Palestine in 1944 was 521,564. In view of the political situation in Argentina it is worth noting that 350,000 of the approximately 580,000 Jews in Latin America live in that country.

Documentation is presented to show that the Jews in the armed forces of the United States have done their full share in acts of bravery and in the laying down of their lives. People of good will have assumed this without question but because of the ill-willed minority it is well to have these facts recorded. In this connection it is of interest to learn that at the time of the Japanese surrender 309 rabbis had become chaplains as compared with a total of 26 in World War I. This constituted over two-thirds of the eligible qualified rabbis of the country. Of these 210 served overseas.

We conclude with two unrelated items. Contrary to widely circulated reports at the time of his death, Henri Bergson was not a convert to Roman Catholicism. Readers of Lowdermilk's *Palestine, Land of Promise* were interested in his proposal for a Jordan Valley Authority which he claimed would provide the economic basis for 4,000,000 more inhabitants of Palestine. Both *Year Books* indicate that this proposal has become the basis for extensive planning looking toward its realization.

EUGENE S. TANNER

*The University of Tulsa*

### Miscellaneous

*Elementary Hebrew.* By E. LESLIE CARLSON. Kansas City, Kansas: Central Seminary Press, 1945. iii + 274 pages. \$3.50.

This Hebrew textbook is by the Professor of Old Testament Introduction and Interpretation at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, who has had twenty-three years' experience in teaching Hebrew. It endeavors to present the elements of the language in simplified form by the use of the inductive method. This method was made popular by the late William Rainey Harper. The present volume incorporates much of Harper's technique, using the first fourteen chapters of Genesis, but requires the use of only one book (whereas Harper's method demands two). An ingenious method of transliteration is used at the beginning, much help is given the student along the way, and the minimum essentials of Hebrew are presented in very simplified form.

This textbook can be recommended not only for use in elementary classes in Hebrew, but also for self-instruction. It has been printed unusually well, and is of convenient size and sturdy binding.

J. PHILIP HYATT

*School of Religion, Vanderbilt University*

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# THE ASSOCIATION

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## The New York Meeting

President Mary E. Lyman called the NABI together in business session on Friday evening, December 28, 1945 at 7:30 p. m. at General Theological Seminary.

The President reported that the Committee on the Course of Study for Secondary Schools Offering a Unit of Bible for College Entrance be continued and make a fuller report at a later time. Helen Van Voast, chairman of the Committee, urged the members to cooperate in making the unit better known to teachers in private and secondary schools.

The President called upon Floyd V. Filson who reported on the activities of the Midwestern Branch of the Association. Professor Filson made the following report:

The National Association of Biblical Instructors and its Midwestern Branch have never developed a close working relationship. This is largely due to geographical conditions. Nevertheless, it is worth while to explore possibility of more effective cooperation, and your committee was asked to consider this situation.

Unfortunately, the constitutional provisions regarding the relation of branch organizations to the Association were not known when the Association discussed the problem last year. The constitution provides that the chairman of each branch organization is ipso facto a member of the Council of the Association. This provision has been ignored. Now that it is known, your committee feels that the chairman of the Midwestern Branch should be the one who carries on future discussion concerning the relation of that Branch to the Association. However, since this question is of concern to the Association as a whole, we present the following further report:

1. Since the chairman of the Midwestern Branch is a member of the Council, the name of the chairman should be carried in the Journal in the list of Council members, and all communications which go to Council members should reach this chairman.

2. Since the action of the Association last December, providing that the Midwestern Branch should nominate an associate in Council every third year and thus be represented on the Council,

was taken in ignorance of the constitutional provision for representation of the Midwestern Branch by its chairman, that action can not be considered valid. It may be pointed out, however, that since the Association is a national organization, the geographical area from which members of the Council may be chosen is not limited to any section of the country; the only tests are competence to fill the office and willingness to attend meetings of the Council and Association.

3. It is not practical to try to coordinate the programs of the Association and the Midwestern Branch. Each group will have its own interests, and these will largely overlap. It will be for the good of the Journal if the two groups do not have identical programs. We suggest that the Journal editor, with whom program chairmen of both groups usually consult, is the one who can best advise program chairmen of topics and lines of study worth exploring.

4. We suggest that the Association consider the possibility of a meeting, somewhere in the midwestern area. Such a step has never been taken, but a truly national organization ought not be tied to any one meeting place. New York is undoubtedly the most convenient meeting place for the greatest number, and the annual meeting ordinarily should be held there. We believe, however, that an occasional variation in place of meeting is possible and right. Such a shift of place of meeting would have to be planned in advance, and two main questions may be raised for present consideration: (1) Should such plans be made in conjunction with a similar plan of the SBL&E? Most of the Association attendants do not attend the SBL&E meetings, but some do, and both meetings deal with the Bible in whole or in part. (2) Where should such a meeting be held? Two alternatives present themselves. A meeting in Chicago has the guarantee of an attendance adequate to support a full program. A meeting further east, in some such place as Oberlin or Cleveland would be more accessible for eastern members, and for continuity of Council meetings the attendance of eastern members of the Council is highly desirable. We recommend that the President of the Association and the chairman of the



Midwestern Branch carry on discussion and propose to the Association a plan for a meeting somewhere in the midwestern region. But we point out that such a plan ought not to be adopted unless both groups are ready to work to make such a meeting effective and unless the Council which will function that year is ready to give adequate leadership.

5. It may be that the most fruitful relations between the Association and the Midwestern Branch can take the form of coordinated activity in studies and projects. The best way to provide a framework for such collaboration is to appoint as one member of an Association committee-of-three a member from the midwestern region, and let that member draw on the resources available in his area through the fellowship of the Midwestern Branch.

It was voted that the report be accepted as a recommendation and that the Association explore the possibility of a meeting in the Middle West as soon as possible.

President Lyman reported that the Council had recommended that next year's meeting be held in New York on December 27-28. It was voted that the Council reconsider its recommendation concerning the time and place of next year's meeting and at least explore the possibility of the meeting next year in the Middle West. A straw vote was taken and it stood twenty-five for New York and eight for the Middle West.

The President called for the Treasurer's report. Dr. Beck announced the fact that the Association had 645 members and that 75 new members were added this year. He reported that the financial condition of the Association was sound. It was voted to accept the Treasurer's report and appoint an auditing committee to validate it. Dr. Elmer W. K. Mould was appointed a committee of one to perform this service.

Dean Lankard reported for the Committee on the Under-Graduate Major in Religion. The other members were: Edward E. Domm and J. Paul Williams. The consensus of the discussion was that the training of the pre-seminary student should be broad but sufficiently particular in Bible and Religion so that the interest in these fields might be preserved and that he may possess the ability to carry on in these fields in the seminary at a truly graduate level.

Professor Mary Andrews read Dr. Eugene Ashton's report for the Committee on Vacancies:

The first need of the Committee at the present time is more enrollees, especially younger men and women beginning or in the early stages of their teaching career. There seems to be a definite teacher shortage.

The second need is not a new one. The Committee needs the help of every member of the Association in reporting vacancies. In addition to the publicity of the Committee it is extremely helpful to the chairman if the Association members communicate to the chairman any existing vacancies they hear of.

In the coming year it is hoped that the Committee can do more also in the field of Junior Colleges and Preparatory Schools.

It was voted to accept the report.

The committee appointed by the Council through the President to study the problems in connection with the Journal reported through Dr. Carl E. Purinton, who requested that the contract for printing the Journal be given to a firm which could offer more editorial services. Dr. Beck called attention to the extra cost involved in the change and added the caution that he did not think the assets of the Association would warrant a change. Dr. Lovell felt that it was better to face all of the facts, make the change now, and meet the financial situation. It was voted to raise the dues of NABI to \$3.50 a year and leave the place of printing to the discretion of the Editor.

Dr. Roland E. Wolfe reported for the Committee on Nominations. The nominations were:

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Vice President: Virginia Corwin, Smith College.  
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Program Chairman: S. Vernon McCasland, University of Virginia.

Associate in Council: Amos N. Wilder, Chicago Theological Seminary.

Chairman, Committee on Vacancies: Eugene S. Ashton, Goucher College.

It was voted that the Secretary cast the ballot for the nominations for the several offices. This was done.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANK G. LANKARD

Secretary pro tem

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